Stanford University Studies

IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

06

SWAMI OMKARANANDA

AN ATTEMPT TOWARDS A SYSTEMATIC SURVEY OF THE

Stanford University Studies

IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

BY

Sri Swami Omkarananda

PUBLISHED BY

The Sivananda Literature Research Institute

P.O. Sivanandanagar, Rishikesh, Himalayas, India

Price] **1960** [*Rs. 6/-*



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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

This significant publication of the Sivananda Literature Research Institute, that bears some of the many of the outstanding merits with which the earlier works of this young mystic-author are characterised, has been rushed through the Press, with unusual speed, for the specific purpose of aiding it constitute itself into a presentation volume for our Christian readers of the Sivananda Literature, on the happy occasion of the nineteen-sixty Christmas. The same reason or announcement the last chapter, devoted wholly to a conveyance of something of the meaning, the mission and the message of Jesus Christ as reflected in the written works of Sivananda, voices eloquently.

25th December, 1960. —THE PUBLISHERS.

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A Leaf From "Preliminary Contributions to Comparative Studies and Researches in Sivananda Literature" Volume Two:

SIVANANDA LITERATURE ON THE SYMBOLICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND THE SPIRITUAL EFFECTS OF THE MYSTIC MONO-SYLLABLE —OM.

THE triliteral monosyllabic Sanskrit word, *Om, philologically* considered, covers in its triple *mora,* the entire ground of sound-phenomena, and acquires the distinction of being the only scientific syllable in all languages; as a transcription in time-limits, in all Nature, and through the human voice, of the timeless mystic resonance inherent in the primeval functionings of the Infinite, it gains the prerogative of being the only natural, real, original, sublime and synonymless Name of the Infinite Divinity, as against all other names of the Deity, whether in Hinduism or in other world religions, that are found to be man-made, qualified, characteristic, derived from the attributes of the Divine apprehended by an approaching, adoring and aspiring human intelligence: then, *philosophically*, it is not so much a descriptive synonym as the very constitutive essence and organic self-expression of the

indestructible Reality, *Akshara; cosmogonically* and *cosmologically*, it is the archetype of Creative Power, the Logos not as conceived by Philo but as envisioned and experienced by the luminous Soul of the Vedic Seers, the creative and revelatory Divine Word, the inconceivably subtle elemental sound-structure self-formed of light, *Tejas,* full of the primordial and ultimate Energy that forms, sustains and reabsorbs billions of universes and that is immanent in all that is manifest, as rhythm, reason, law, sound-continuum-cum light-continuum, analysable in a sequence, as the first and fundamental Thought, a Will, a Self-conscious Entity, a great Self-organising Consciousness; *ontologically,* in its *mora*-less, syllableless, nameless, soundless aspect, it is the Transcendent Unmanifest, and by this uniqueness of its native double status, overcomes the hurdles of the dualistic principles in Platonic and other cosmogonies and yields itself by its intrinsic and extrinsic scientific character as the only foundation for an integral philosophy of life and action; *therapeautically,* several and repeated experiments in its vibrations have conclusively proved its curative, sedative and healing effects: *psychologically,* the incessant mental repe-

tition of this creative Word, results in the wholesome and personality-integrating physiological effect of a deep track made in the brain, effectuates a sublimation of the conational substance, a transmutation of mind's crude energies, and, in consequence, exerts an awakening and formative impact upon the inner life; *psychically,* advanced Yogic students, by virtue of a subjective mastery over its repetition, release rhythmic internal vibrations and regulate the irregular flow of the vital force, the unsteady and disharmonious vibrations of the five sheaths, restore a rare poise and balance to the mental functions, and seek to hit the plexii and awaken the powers coiled in them; *parapsychologically, astrally,* and *supra-terrestrically,* the ancient Rishis of contemplative perception and living beatific experience, who have had the advantage of conducting by extra-scientific faculties special investigations in the psychological, psychic, ocult and spiritual potentialities of the mysterious and mystic sound embodied in this sacred syllable, discovered that when intoned in accordance with the prescribed rules and potentiated by the purified heart, it unfolds the Consciousness-Force inherent in itself and can not only radically

transform the entire Man at each of his conscious, sub-conscious and unconscious levels and render active in him the Power of the Superconscient, but also aid him, through the non-material and extraordinarily subtle waves ensconced in its produced vibrations, affect or influence the inhabitants of other worlds, touch and quicken the heart of the Deity and move It to flood him with Its Grace; *musicologically,* it constitutes the substratum of all the seven notes, and in one of the preceding higher gradations of its own self-manifestation, it presents itself as the primal music of the spheres, subtler than the one of Shakespeare's grand conception and sweeter than the celestial music *acoustically perceived* by the poetic genius of Milton, audible only to the inner audience of the perfected Yogis, and transcendentally represents itself as *Nada-Brahman,* the Melody Absolute, claiming for its devotees such supreme Indian Beethovens as Tyagaraja; *methodologically,* it commands all for itself, an independent school of sound-mysticism, *Natha-Yoga,* plays a preeminent role in the scheme of Vedantic thought, in the systems of Yoga, in the Tantra Sadhana, and finds the Upanishads repeatedly eulogizing it, commending a

meditation upon it, for an assimilation of its deepest significance and its most comprehensive meaning which were, tradition has it, difficult of description, even for such great sages like Brihaspati and Vasishtha, and speaking of it in a series of metaphors such as a bow, an arrow, a ship that convey the soul of man into the Bosom of the Eternal and the Infinite which it itself is.

Om—from the standpoint of the daily popular Indian religious practices, its pronouncement, as a benedictory prelude, a manifest divine sanction and a procurer of success, precedes all sacrificial acts, domestic rituals, textual recitations, expiatory rites, purificatory ceremonies, and is widespread in its usage as an auspicious symbol representative of some, of the Trinity of the Hindu pantheon, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, to others, emblematic of the Knowledge and the Arts of the supreme Vedic and Pauranic Minerva, Saraswati, and identical with the Gnosis, the Wisdom and the obstacle-clearing Weapon of Ganesha, and to yet others reminiscent of Sri Krishna who avowed, in the Bhagavad Gita, oneness with it, and as an initiatory syllable, an ensurer of prosperity

enjoined to be employed at the commencement of every new public undertaking or business enterprise, and as a sacred word indispensable of utterance for effectuation, at the beginning and ending of each of the Upanishadic peace-chants which make for personal mental tranquillity, environmental calmness, world peace and universal harmony. And despite the great variety and the constancy of its sectarian uses, its sacrosanctitude never diminishes; its varied ritualistic utility, the appropriations of it for thaumaturgical performances, the apparent profanation of its sanctity by yoking it to ulterior purposes in popular practices, do neither affect its superlative sacredness and leading role, as the great mystic formula for Liberation, the one Mantra for gaining the *summum bonum* of existence, in the life of the orthodox Brahmanical Sannyasin and of the idealistic Vedantin, nor blur its spiritual symbolism and, much less, lessen its transcendental philosophic significance,—a phenomenon that constitutes an eloquent argument on its integrality, comprehensiveness, ultimateness, its status of being at once *alpha* and *omega* of everything, manifest and unmanifest, of the immanent and the Transcendent.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY STUDIES

In Sivananda Literature

By temper a column of restless prophetic energy, Sivananda of calm wisdom and supreme inner spiritual realisation, has made grist to the mills of his tireless acts of giving written guidance, every type, form and phase of divine life. The most restrained appreciation of even the least of of his mighty achievements in the field of spiritual experimentation, experience and expression, must be something bordering on amazement. Amazement, because the phenomenon we are dealing with, is brought to being by a Power wholly Divine, and the least of its acts can easily evoke the wonder of human vision, and baffle the pride and strength of human capacity. The Divine wins and accomplishes, and each of its achievements is a marvel, a miracle to the proud impotent potency of the human which fumbles, falters and slips into the limbo of oblivion.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

Chapter One

Sivananda and Stewart Brand

The veracity, the profundity and the power of Sivananda's wise words provoke the keen-eyed intelligence, and arouse the restrained appreciation of Steward B. Brand, who finds in Sivananda not only a knower of the Truth, but also 'an extremely sharp individual, whose knowledge of history, science, the general world, and the human mind, matches his mastery over the technicalities of Yoga, Hinduism' and Indian thought, one who, for all his established world-wide reputation, remains outstanding, where the academic world is concerned, not merely as an adept in the delineation of the delicate nuances of the beatific states of the obtained Samadhi, in the formulation of the fundamental and formative principles of the Indian cultural experience, but also as an expert in the presentation of his own dynamic analyses of the international situation and the brittle bases of modern civilization, in giving the needed guidance to a mankind groping towards progress and seeking an extension of the boundaries of its own knowledge.

Sivananda Literature—the Triple Constituent of its Impressiveness, and Stewart's Claims

to Competence for a Critical Assessment of its Qualitative Uniqueness

WE are impressed by what is new, what stimulates our thought, what shakes our opinions. Hence, the considerable impression made on me, by Swami Sivananda's *Yoga Samhita.* Before I started a study of the book, I was not entirely ignorant of the subject. I knew something of Yoga, of its methods, aims and significance; knew also of Sivananda's own successes, and of the very great veneration in which he is held by people, all over the world. Consequently, the early part of the book did not affect me much. It was largely an introduction to Yoga, to its various divisions and methods, and to the Indian terms involved in describing it. The early chapters were relatively simple in their presentation and content. but, in them. I began to see the qualities of the author. Sivananda and understand his procedures.

Absence of Self-doubt, Freedom from Bragging, and the Knowledge of the Self, Distinguish Sivananda the Enlightened

Sivananda has very apparently attained something definite in the way of

Enlightenment. He speaks with the weight and assurance of a man who knows the Truth. Yet he is not argumentative nor over-emphatic—attitudes which would indicate self-doubt. Further, his words could easily be read as conceited, for he makes no bones about making unqualified statements, and otherwise displaying his personal certainty, but the tone and the very certainty expressed prevent the reader from being offended. The man is quite unconcerned with his own position in finding and conveying the truth. Bragging consists not in what one says so much as in how one says it—a fact well illustrated by Sivananda.

The Eloquence of Sivananda Conveys the Eastern Experience and Meaning by an Employment of the English Terms in a Spirit Apposite to the Genius of the English Language

Also apparent in the early chapters was Sivananda's eloquence. He can speak and write well, that is, effectively and readably. This was particularly pleasant in relation to most of the ill-translated material that comes out of the East. Here was a man using English terms in English ways, and conveying an Eastern meaning—no small feat. An example is the nice

but important distinction made in the statement: "To be child-like is good; but to be childish is not good." And any marriage-oriented Stanford student could not help being impressed by the apt words of the sequence: "From admiration to attraction, then to attachment and then to supreme love." Sivananda's words are weighty words, and also the right words.

First Impression Finds the Text Mainly a Reiteration of the Varied Yoga Formulae

But, though impressive, by the middle of the book Sivananda has still shown little. What he says is familiar, and repeated too often. Except for occasional pearls such as "Not to hurt others is not so difficult as not to be hurt by others," "pain is an eye-opener", and "work keeps Tamas (inertia) away", the text is mainly a reiteration of the various formulae.

Patient Further Study Shows that Sivananda is no "Over-famous Old-man Repeating Profundities to a Mixed Audience", But "An Extremely Sharp Individual"....

Then the tone changes, and it is no longer just an over-famous old man repeating profundities to a mixed audience. Now it is an extremely sharp individual,

whose knowledge of history, science, the general world, and the mind matches his familiarity with the technicalities of Yoga and Hinduism. Using this knowledge obtained from any place but an ivory tower, the author proceeds to subjects varying from the extremely practical to the extremely abstract.

Superabundance of Ritualism in Institutional Religions 'Versus' the Accent in the Religion of Sivananda on the Development of Personal Excellences and Personal Religious Insight

It was from this point on that I began to be really impressed. In the first place I started to see that Yoga is a great deal more than just rituals. Indeed, Sivananda discourages the offering of flowers to the Lord in comparison to offering "the most fragrant flowers of dispassion, truthfulness, sincerity," etc. Sivananda is also unimpressed by religious feats unless accompanied by important virtues. He thus condemns ritual for ritual's sake—an evil that is the bane of all religions.

No Western Gymnastics and Callisthenics—these Yogic Exercises, Sivananda Contends, Yield Manifold Benefit At Once for the Body, the Mind, the Life and the Soul.

To consider only a lower level, I realized how really effective the Hatha Yoga "positions" are for simple health (an aspect which is very practically given considerable importance). Many of the exercises are almost identical to Western gymnastics and callisthenics. There is undeniably a value here.

But in real value Yoga appears to go considerably beyond that. To consider the "rungs of Yoga" in their order, *yama* seeks to replace vice with virtue; *niyama* gives the aspirant more actual self-control; *asanology* provides greater serenity; *pranayama* continues the process of control through the control of breath; *pratyahara* and *dharana* bring the mind to concentrate, oblivious of distractions. All these are reasonable, advantageous, and attainable by Yoga. As Sivananda points out, these things are especially important in our increasingly nervous world.

Stewart Isolates from Sivananda Literature
An Analysis of the International Situation

Sivananda, by writing sincerely on such advantages of Yoga, becomes extremely convincing. When he says that India is behind scientifically because the Indian genius has turned inward to the "permanent

truths"; when he describes the world chaos as the result of Western science and offers the result of Indian genius—Yoga—as "the path out of this bloody maze", I find myself desiring to agree. Perhaps he is right that the present world situation is an evidence of the total failure of the material approach; perhaps he is right that Yoga is the answer.

Disregards the Disagreement on the Inadequacy of the Materialistic Approach, and Proceeds to Present a Testament of the Impressions on Him, Made by Sivananda Literature

But agree or not, I continually found ideas in the book that were new to me in one way or another, and hence stimulated thought. I was interested in the conception of "man as a centre of pure consciousness, localised within enfolding sheaths of matter of varying degrees of subtlety." Psychology and the Indians seemed to me to have an assenting voice in the statement, "Thought is the greatest force on earth." I was reminded of my own musings on each individual being the centre of the universe by Sivananda's idea which goes far beyond that, namely, that the universe is the projection, the creation, of each

individual mind, subject to destruction at will by sleep or fascination. I was intrigued by the property of Samadhi which joins "the meditator and the meditated, the thinker and the thought....the subject and the object." I was impressed by the term "supramental psychology." I was stimulated by the quotation "As a man thinketh, so he becometh"; it seems to take all bounds off human possibilities. And the single sentence, "The human being is instinct with love," is good cause for a psychology and philosophy of its own. In all I recognized from my own thought and hence appreciated from Sivananda his concern with practicality and sincerity, his constant effort to destroy the ego, his emphasis on Self-knowledge, and I found a great deal to apppreciate in the doctrine of Self—with a capital *S*.

—*Stewart B. Brand.*

Chapter Two

Sivananda and Dorothy

Like a critic resolutely intent on discountenancing every strand of thought that fails to stand the tests of disciplined reason, yet like a soul sensible to the highest ideals and values by which the creative minds, down through the centuries, nourished the cultural urges and expressions of humanity, the brilliant Dorothy approaches Sivananda Literature, and devotes her special attention to the literary aspect of it, finds her interest elicited by Sivananda's exhortative modes of self-expression, and apt and delightful analogies, and lists the number of benefits we would, without effort, derive from his writings. The spirit of her approach to the Sivananda Literature and to the manner of the style therein, show, to some extent, the ascendency in the trends of her educational pursuits, the literary and cultural interests take.

Threefold Value of Sivananda's Work: 1) the Gaining of the Practical Knowledge, 2) the Grasp of the Historical Background, 3) an Understanding of Sivananda's 'Weltanschauung'

THERE were three very important things which I derived from this book of

Swami Sivananda, *Yoga and Realization.* First, a practical knowledge of Yoga; second, a historical and definitive understanding of Yoga; and third, a hint as to the philosophical insights and world-views which the Swami holds himself.

Sivananda Dispels Western Illusions About Yoga and Excels, in the Presentation of Fuller and More Satisfactory Explanations, Most Yoga Exponents

By a practical knowledge of Yoga, I mean that knowledge from which one derives an understanding of how to practise Yoga. I found his explanations on Yoga much fuller and more satisfactory than others I have read for several seasons. First, Sivananda has a very realistic outlook and he recognises the follies and failings of men, and therefore, he is constantly explaining effective methods for breaking into this Yogic system as well as urging you onward. Secondly, he dispels also many illusions and false ideas which people, especially in the West, hold about Yoga, and thirdly, although these details might seem to some to be superfluous by reading between the lines that explain the various practices, you can ob-

tain a very vivid, as well as complete, picture of the science of Yoga.

Marked by Clarity and Completeness, Sivananda's Definitions of the Yogas Make More Meaningful the Meaning the Yogas Themselves Embody

The next value of this book lies in the history and definition of the different systems of Yoga. Sivananda's definitions are very clear and complete, and make the systems even more meaningful. He enumerates and then analyses the various systems found in the broad field of Yoga, such as Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Raja Yoga. In the end, however, he shows how these different systems are related and fuses them into what he calls a "synthesis of Yoga". He also gives very detailed and colourful explanations of such things as the Mantras.

Philosophical Insights and World-view Implicit in Sivananda's Fundamental Theses of Experience, and the Nature of Their Corollaries

Another important feature of this book consists in the philosophical insights and world-view which are held by Sivananda and which he proclaims throughout the book. He believes that everything can be reduced to one and that there is a unity

in diversity and a oneness of consciousness. A corollary to this is the opinion that all religions are essentially the same. In addition to this world-view, he presents his ideas on certain more definite concepts such as mind which he feels is the product of ignorance, and education, which is obtainable, not in a University, but only by rising above the self. We also hold certain beliefs which he holds. For instance, that healing by prayer is possible and that everything is a manifestation of God. Probably the final significance of this book lies in the fact that it can be reinterpreted and re-evaluated in terms of a message for the West. He occasionally inserts a criticism of a Western practice as differentiated from one in the East. Here then, is an example of this trend: "The West is immersed in scientific discoveries and materialistic advancement....how infinitely you are busy with your body and its conceits."

Dorothy Lays Down Some Conditions for the Most Profitable Pursuit of Sivananda Literature Which She Finds Replete with Profound Passages Designed for Repeated Reflection

THIS book, *Yoga and Realization,* is a very interesting as well as a very mean-

ingful work. It is very easy to read through it quickly and in a superficial manner, and still extract something from it; however, Sivananda's writings are most efficacious if they are read slowly, and absorbed and digested carefully, and in a thoughtful way. One of the chief merits of this book lies in the fact that the reader is able to pick it up, turn anywhere, and find a passage worthy of being reflected over and meditated upon.

The Exhortative Style of Sivananda Directed to Raise Everyman to His Innate Spiritual Dignity

Much of this writing that is directed to lead you into meditation, is put in the form of questions; in other words, he will occupy whole paragraphs by asking you, "What is good? What is mind?", and so on. Exhortation is another obvious style of his writing. He is incessantly urging you to give up the pettiness of this life. An example of this exhortative style: "Don't think of the past. Don't plan for the future. Do not allow the mind to build images. Live in the solid present." Much of his thought is also expressed in short, direct and concise statements. I felt that one of the most enjoyable experi-

ences of the book consisted in discovering Sivananda's apt and delightful analogies. There is a wealth and abundance of these, each seeming more appropriate than the last. For instance, he compares man's mind to a house-fly which might perch on a sweet object, but which, the next minute, would prefer to alight on a dung-heap.

Sivananda—His Critique of the West But a Passing Digression, His Preoccupation with World Peace and World Welfare the Real Thing

Sivananda is also preoccupied with the question of world peace. He feels that ignorance and an irreligious life are the causes of war and thus that Yoga is a solution to international problems. Thus, it is not hard to see that this little volume has an importance and significance far outweighing its size.

—*Dorothy Ingebretsen.*

Chapter Three

Sivananda and John Powell

The observations of Sivananda that permit any act of common reflection a penetrating perception of the very springs of human experience of pain and pleasure, are seen to ensoul a vision, wear a philosophical character, bear a practical import, and are bound to mitigate much of common human misery, even while exalting the soul of man, whether of the East or of the West, over the body he inhabits and above the very cognitive and conative principles by which he knows and feels; and, it is an attention paid to these observations, during his studies in Sivananda Literature, that aid John Powell who evidently owns a logical cast of thought, has a sense for statistics as well as a sense of values, enjoys the gift of discerning and showing to himself and to others, the exact lines along which an individual, a nation, a civilization, a culture, can advance, bring into light some elements of value and meaning, for the life in the West, the written works of Sivananda enshrine.

John Powell's Interpretative, and Almost Didactic Enumeration of the Ideas in Sivananda

Literature that Interested Him Most

CERTAIN of Sivananda's remarks in his *Mind, Its Mysteries and Control,* impressed me the more, the more I scrutinized them; for, they seem to have meaning for me in the West, in formulating our own ideas on life, and further, they are penetrating observations which we may not have, actually formulated for ourselves, in our own minds.

Some of Sivananda's ideas which most interested me follow: 1. 'All pains are not equally felt. It is only when the mind is connected with the body that pain arises.' We certainly all know this is true. At times, in certain moods, we feel pain more than at other times, and anyone who has played an active sport, knows that bumps and bruises are unnoticed until after the game or activity. If people were to try to apply this idea to other situations, such as the dentist chair, they might find it helpful. The Swamiji's point is well-taken and can have practical value for the Westerner who seeks to find something meaningful in Eastern thought for himself. The realisation of the ability of the mind to detach itself from the physical world and the body, is an important recognition.

2. 'Milk is agreeable to some and disagreeable to others. There is nothing wrong with the milk itself.' Here again we can see the influence of the mind, the part it plays in everyday life. I think that better discipline of the mind is a valuable goal at which to aim. It will help to weed out the superfluous, the paradoxical, and the ridiculous from our lives. If we can only come to a realisation of the absurdities that dominate us so much, such as the Swami's milk example, and all without our being consciously aware of them, our lives and actions could follow a more consistent track. To learn to put things in their proper places, so that we don't emphasize the unimportant to the denial of the important, is desirable. To realise the superiority of the mind to the body, and the need for its higher cultivation and development, is a great advance for an individual.

The Value of Sivananda Literature for the Clarification of the West's Own Ideas, in the Casting of New Light on Important Questions, from a Diversity of Standpoint, and in the Demonstration of the Universality of Man in His Nature, Aspirations and Aims

3. 'Forgive and pity the man who

does you harm'—here is a truly Christian idea, as preached by Jesus. It is the dedicated man who can live his life with this idea as a basis for his actions. Few who call themselves Christians do. I think that no one can live up to this perfectly, but one who makes a genuine attempt is at least trying to live the Christian life. Human nature, with its frailties and perversities, is inadequate to put this idea into perfect practice. The Swami's point is actually universal in its application. Here again, we can see the importance of having an understanding of Eastern ideas. It shows us the similarity of peoples everywhere who on casual inspection seem very different. To realise that the Easterner has many of the same questions and beliefs that we have, with only the emphasis perhaps a little altered, is to realise the kinship of all men. The Swami's ideas, point out the basic alikeness of different nations and peoples; for, we see in them truths that we have perhaps felt or even thought of ourselves. And this I think is the important notion to be derived from the Swami's book, that some one, who represents on first glance, a people quite different from we of the West, has so many

[Continued on page 20]

SIVANANDA—

and the Pursuit of Knowledge in the Institutions
of Higher Learning and in Life

Enshrining the essences of the exoteric and the esoteric Indian wisdom, the literature of Sivananda holds out for modern mankind, in a tongue intelligible to it, such techniques of Self-perfection that settle, once for all, the extraordinary sanity of Indian thought over all the philosophies of life known to the world, determine its maturity over all the religions the Good Earth bears on its bosom, and distinguish supremely the rightness, the integrality, the effectivity of its methods over the methods of psycho-ananlysis and all other dynamic contemporary psychologies.

Unless Sivananda laid the rhyme-schemes of his exalted life upon the heart-beats of the omnipresent Divinity, he would have hardly been enabled to pour into print, in such profusion, such profound Wisdom, and in such words which while they touch us with their light, raise us, by their power, into higher altitudes of inspiration and of a transformed nature.

Feats of unusual energy and excellence can be conceivable as possible, and even normal of performance, for those persons like Sivananda that repose their minds and their vital awareness in the Consciousness of the Cosmic Being, draw their almost inexhaustible enthusiasm for the elevation of mankind, and their energies, for pouring light and sweetness into the human mind, therefrom, and live habitually in its context.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA

[Continued from page 18]

true observations on life and the nature of man and his mind, so many of the basic pre-occupations, anxieties and fears that we have. There is much to be learned from the East, for it can clarify our ideas, shed new light from different points of view on important questions, and demonstrate to us the similarities of men everywhere.

—*John Powell.*

Chapter Four

Sivananda and Viola Berry

A yet another unique aspect of Indian thought inlaid in the inspiring soul of the literature of Sivananda, consisting in the disciplines, the Indian heart that is the Indian mind, assigns to itself, by adoration of the supreme power and presence indwelling all that is manifest, and latent in all that is unmanifest, as the Divine Mother, that is, as all that is the very Consciousness of all Consciousness, the Being of all the centres of beings, the Power constituting the ultimate substance of all forms of power, as all that is full of dynamis, gnosis, aesthesis, as all that makes for sportive and creative activity, for the human achievement of enduring eminence, for the divine accomplishment of the novelty of endless self-formulation by the supracosmic Being, catches, by just a little of the understanding of itself, it has permitted to, the Western intelligence in Viola Berry.

The lucid commentaries which accompany Sivananda's presentment of the practical metaphysics of the all-sublimating and all-transforming worship of God as Mother in India, render it particularly interesting to the

Western minds interested in the conquest of their ignorance of the mechanics, the dynamics and the the aesthetics of the inner human psyche and its multiple profundity and power.

THE first thing that struck me about this book, *Tantra Yoga, Nada Yoga and Kriya Yoga* by Swami Sivananda, was its introduction by several pages of elaborate appreciation of its author, which aroused my curiosity to look for the kind of message a man whose life has had such a profound effect on the thinking of the Westerners as well as the Easterners, would give me.

The discussion on the first of the three systems of Yoga, Tantra Yoga, emphasised the idea of Shakti as the Divine Mother, the sustaining power and energy of the universe, the principle of creation, and as the consort of Siva, the changeful compliment to his being that is the unchanging impersonal consciousness. A simile which illustrates the relation of Siva and Shakti and emphasizes the fact that they are one, is that "the difference between God and His Shakti is like the difference between fire and its burning power," i.e., none. Shakti then is the power latent in Siva's

pure consciousness and is manifest in mind, matter, energy.

Sadhana—the process of practice constituting the Tantra Yoga awakens or releases the energies of the Chakras, of the Kundalini; and when these powers or the manifestations of Shakti, are fully awakened they will unite with the Siva of pure Consciousness. This Mother-worship seems particularly interesting to a Westerner, in the light of some of the comments which Sivananda makes upon it; for example:
1. It is compared to the Western adoration of the Virgin Mary—seemingly an expression of man's need to find a softer, more personal, feminine aspect of his Divinity.

2. All women are the forms of the divine Mother—a Mother's concern for the welfare of her child is in microcosm like the power of the creative and sustaining matter Shakti. This worship of Maternal Energy also provoked other comments interesting to Westerners:

A. That the worship of energy or Shakti is the oldest and most widespread religion in the world. Everyone loves power and therefore everyone is follower of Shakti.

B. Swamiji now says that energy is the basis of Matter, therefore, of reality as we ordinarily perceive it. The Shakta has been saying that all along.

The kind of Yoga called Nada Yoga would seemingly be easier than other types, for Westerners to understand, as far as a knowledge of its actual effects is concerned. By Sivananda, sound is described as the first manifestation of Brahman, that most effectively attracts and absorbs the mind. Although the Laya or absorption (a synonym for Samadhi) which a Yogi experiences, is not the same as what a listener who is deeply absorbed in music feels, still it is enough to enable a music lover understand better the Yogi's experience.

In a super-sonic age initiated by the twentieth century science, India of the world's ancient past, yet holds unchallenged supremacy in the science of Sound, Sound and its richest potentialities for the ascension of the Soul of man into the realms of perfection in Consciousness.

Sivananda's discussion of Nada, includes a description of the experiments dealing with the kind of shapes which

such waves produce. He states that particular sounds produce particular shapes. This would seemingly prove further the oneness of all things, since the shape of the object of meditation could be evoked through the instrumentality of its particular sound. The Kriya Yoga which Sivananda describes seems more like the Westerner's usual view of Yoga. The Yoga of purification, austerities which is concerned with the control of the mind, the speech and the body, involves the kind of practices which have formed vigorous form of Yoga. For example: standing in cold water, going naked in the snow—the lower forms of Tapas, as well as the vows of Silence and the adherence to truthfulness which form part of the discipline of the speech.

The almost endless range of provision in spiritual practice, made for the individual preference and for the individuality of temperament and capacity among the seekers after Truth forms yet another unique facet of the dynamic Indian thought mirrored in the Literature of Sivananda.

Swami Sivananda writes that self-surrender comes ungrudgingly and freely. Yet that the devotee does not want to become

sugar but taste sugar. There is pleasure in tasting sugar, but not in becoming sugar itself; so the devotee feels that there is supreme joy more in loving God than in becoming God. An idea which appealed to me very strongly. Yet Swami Sivananda goes on to say 'even against his will' the devotee merges in, and becomes one with, God. In his presentation of these three types of Yoga, Sri Swami Sivananda seems to advocate none over the others. To someone who has been brought up sometimes narrowly within the denominational limits of Western Christianity, the differences between these kinds of Yoga, might seem very great indeed, although their ends are the same. Apparently, to an Easterner, these differences may only serve particularly to suit the differences in the preference and attitude of individual seekers.

—*Viola Berry.*

Chapter Five

Sivananda and Linda Newby

A new conception of Yoga as Cosmic Consciousness and a complexus of disciplines leading thereto, and its stages as stages of progression from seeming half-lights to the eternal Self-illumination of the Self, from an experience of the transient events, of the things that constantly change into something other than themselves, to an attainment of the self-contained, self-sufficient, self-delight of the changeless Reality, examinee Linda Newby obtains from Sivananda's Yoga for the West, and this is a view of Yoga altogether different from the many sensational notions of it subsistent in the Western mind, notions ranging from Yoga as merely a demonstration of the possible wizardry the Indian can work with muscles and breath, a tip-of-the-nose-watching practice, a matter of sitting cross-legged for six hours or stopping the pulse of the heart or getting oneself buried underneath the earth for a week or a month, to Yoga as just that something which has to do with thamatergic exhibition, sleight of the hand, a display of obscene sorcery, an easy perversion of psychic powers.

Accustomed to a tone specifically of the spiritual India, and belonging to a cadre distinctively intellectual in temper, Linda Newby records the results of her critical studies in, and makes an interpretative representation of the content of, Sivananda's Yoga for the world of progressive individuals in the West.

Yoga for the West by Swami Sivananda is an attempt to present in the simplest possible terms to the Western mind the value of Yoga. Yoga is much more than the external exercises which are associated with it. It is the means to achieving our goal in life, God-realization. The book tells how we can achieve this state and the changes that will take place as a result.

Achieving God-realization is a scientific mode of living which can be perfected by perseverance in controlling the mind and the body so that one can become aware of one's true Immortal Self. One must learn to control the mind and body in order to feel that one's own self is a part of the all-pervading Consciousness of the Divine. You thus achieve a sense of Oneness or realization of the Cosmic Consciousness. Everyone has infinite hidden potentialities which can be freed through Yoga. Yoga gives us this awareness.

Brahman is another word for this experience of Cosmic Consciousness and what is behind it as its sustaining Power, and the knowledge of the Brahman is the only way in which we can avoid continued rebirth and gain eternal bliss.

To realise Brahman we must pass through several phases of Sadhana. First, we must purify our mind of all evils such as hate, jealousy, etc., through meditation on God. We must have faith in God and see Him in everything. Towards our fellowman we must be sincere, honest, and loving. One must be moderate in all things, not overindulging in food, speech, or any worldly pleasures. One must be satisfied with his Karma and in doing this one will not be greedy, greed is the root of all evils.

One cannot achieve Awareness merely by following the above way of life; one must also practise Yogic exercises and have a Guru. The Yoga exercises are the concrete means of realizing the true Self, because they make it possible for one to control the body and the Prana or the vital energy exerted by or muscles and thoughts. Breathing exercises are for this and therefore, this stage is called Pranayama. The Yoga exercises were not dealt with fully in this book, but their effects were praised

highly. One can expect to be healthier, more joyous and charming, increased in intellectual powers, and be full of vitality. The exercises are very good for all of one's internal organs. The stages of Yoga are briefly described as a progression from darkness or seeming lights to the illumination of the Self, from Maya or delusion to the final attainment of eternal bliss.

Many a lesson Linda learnt from Sivananda's simple yet dignified teaching, and more than that has caught a little of Sivananda's 'infectious' enthusiasm, and has also come to grow in the awareness of the soul of good inextricably implicated and present in everything.

Although much, in fact, everything in a sense, is attained from Yoga, it is absolutely necessary for one to have a Guru from whom to obtain knowledge. One must consider him as equal to God or as infallible. Throughout the book, the stress is laid also on the importance of being in the company of worthy people. The Guru, of course, is above all others, and it is from the Guru one learns the basic principles of Philosophy, that Brahman exists whether or not you realise it, and that you are the master of your own destiny, being full of the omniscience and omnipotence of

the Brahman. One also learns that sin is simply a mistake having no reality of its own and that love is the greatest positive force on earth. One should be unselfish and kind to one's fellow-men always being merciful and forgiving. The final results of the Guru's teachings and the practice of Yoga are a deep inner joy, a capacity to work harder, a radiating personality, which can easily influence others, and a feeling of self-reliance, peace and strength. One no longer has an interest in worldly pleasure, and is completely absorbed by the awareness of the operation of the all-pervading Consciousness.

After reading the book I had a feeling of enthusiasm and a feeling of the good in everything. The author's style has so much vitality that one cannot help but be swept into his train of thought and feeling. One feels the enthusiasm and conviction of the author which makes one feel that all he says must be the truth. Through the repetition of the same thought in the same or different ways one becomes familiar with an idea until it no longer seems merely an idea which is to be analysed rationally, but an unquestioned truth. One gradually feels along with the author and the various ideas presented all fit into

a very simple whole.

After a word or two on the vitality of Sivananda's powerful manner of writing that renders a conversion of the readers to his own thought, quite irresistible, Linda proceeds to register in her official examination book, Sivananda's contribution to man's knowledge of himself, and insistence on the living of the higher life and pursuit of eternal verities and timeless values.

The book has a decidedly Western flavour. Many times the exact phrasing with which we are familiar is used as "forgive and forget" or "know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Doing good for others is often stressed as of prime importance. The idea of the Immortal Self and the oneness of the world seems not contrary to much of Western thought. I think this book is very valuable in that it encourages people to strive towards a higher life where short-lived and changeable worldly values are replaced by eternal truths. By a study of this book, one will gain a better understanding of himself and others, and will grow in love and joy despite being impeded by non-Yogic habits.

—*Linda Newby.*

Chapter Six

Sivananda and Susan Hastings

Negation of the world of relative experience forming the sole field for the wrestle of the strength of man in the powers of his own Consciousness, over the deeds and events of the hand of Time, and the immeasurable expanses of space, is alien to the trend predominantly resident in the Sivananda Literature, the trend that tends towards nothing save the acquisition or the unfoldment of the Knowledge of the Self, for the growing, high-aspiring stresses and movements of human intelligence, through a hundred ways, and through as many guises, the trend that tends towards the central Essence and the ultimate Value in Existence, the realization of which would make of man illimitable in the power of his conscious knowing and in the extent of his conscious delight, a being ineffable in the splendours of Thought that sees eternity in a moment, and all time-eternity as but a single bead in the endless chain of timeless eternity, and....

The accent of Sivananda on the social action governed by the beneficence of spiritual

Enlightenment—Susan finds Sivananda not only ministering to everyman's needs in inner development, but also taking a happy departure from a much strained traditional trend in Hinduism, of renunciation as the only way out of the impasse of the problem of life.

SIVANANDA'S pamphlet, issued by the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy, shows very clearly what this person feels to be important in life. Along with most other followers of the path of Hinduism, he too feels that the most important thing of all, for men, is to find their divine Selves; but he differs, it is to be noted, from the main idea of Hinduism as he rejects the emphasis on the individual becoming a Sannyasi, as it were, wholly renouncing the material world, in search of the spiritual. Sivananda emphasises the importance of society, and says that a society or a group of people living together should make it their common aim, that is, the aim of all their activities, to help each man find his divine Self. He emphasises that the way this can be done is through the community's education, science, ethics, art, and economical and political structure.

In Keeping with the Spirit of Modern Times, Sivananda Maintains an Extremely Realistic Outlook

Sivananda has a very realistic outlook on life—for, he realises that in the modern world of today, no man can renounce totally. Sivananda feels that man, instead of separating the spiritual from the material world, must integrate the two, and this is to be done by helping the people realise that their souls are incarnated for a divine fulfilment in this world, and upon this earth. He feels the way to do this is by applying this idea to every phase of every man's life, and to the cultural, political, social, and economic aspects of the collective life.

The universality of appeal the message of Sivananda bears, and the points of identity it shares, with Christianity, and its differentia consisting in its self-address both to the ill-informed laymen and to the learned elite.

Sivananda's message has great universal appeal, and resembles Christianity in that it emphasizes the fact that man is basically good. This message is directed at all men, not just at the intellectually

elite, for he brings the spiritual down to the common level of everyday life, from which each man can learn something.

—*Susan Hastings.*

Chapter Seven

Sivananda and Judith Hoffman

Personal excellences raised in their eminent manifestation in daily life, to a superlative degree, an ever awe-inspiring personality that never fades even with growing familiarity but grows in the dimensions of its charm and effects with increasing acquaintance, the suggestive, meaningful, disarming, and message-conveying looks, the brief but brilliant conversations interspersed with utterances surcharged with a sense of humour, an attractive physical appearance and more attractive manners and gestures,—all these have gone to form for Sivananda, a combination of rare qualities and personal advantages conspiring to excite the permanent reverence even of the ablest of the dry-as-dust metaphysical philosophers, to draw the silly,— if silly they are,—encomiums from apparently fatuous persons, to endear him to and deduce from, the sentimental and emotional men, an unvarying love, and, if ever the readers come into contact with a great soul as Sivananda, of such unique attributes, they would certainly gain an *a posteriori* experience of this inadequate portrayal, and under-

stand the spirit of the Yoga in which he sustains himself for the unusual richness, range and exaltation of his personal nature, power and achievements, and which he presents to the West.

An idea of the true character of cosmic consciousness, a more complete information on the activities of Sivananda's world-wide organization, a perception of the basic problem inherent in the transmission of a religious insight embodied in one language, and in the background and the reference-field of one culture, into that of the other,—these have been some of the gains of Judith Ann Hoffman from a study of Sivananda's 'Yoga for the West', a summary survey of which she presents below.

THE contents of Sivananda's small book, *Yoga for the West,* are extremely diversified. There is a brief life-sketch of Sivananda, giving the essential facts of his family background, his service as a doctor, and his life as a Yogi. Another short selection describes Ananda Kutir and the work going on there; Ananda Kutir is the Headquarters for the Divine Life Society, having a hospital, a free kitchen, an elementary school, etc. There are over two hundred people employed to work at

Ananda Kutir. Although the Society does not interfere with the personal religion of these people who are laymen, monks and Brahmacharis, it does require of them, an adherence to common ethical principles. The Society supports Vedanta, but sponsors lectures in many religions and holds conferences of all faiths in an effort to achieve religious accord and brotherhood.

Phenomenal advancements in the field of the twentieth century science, impose on human understanding and endeavour a prejudice for seeking after, and making possible a furnishing of, the mechanical proofs for non-mechanical, psychological and extra-psychological experiences—a consideration of the possible potentialities and uses of electro-encephalograms in relation to the states of the super-conscious experience.

In addition to these two factual accounts, this book contains several letters of appreciation to Sivananda from devotees in many countries. There is also an interesting report of a lecture given by Dr. Dass, an Indian Professor, in which is explained that electro-encephalograms could be used to prove that the state of Samadhi was one of true peace and happiness. There is, then, a discussion by Sivananda on the

"Marks of Spiritual Progress," wherein we are told that peace, cheerfulness, contentment, dispassion, fearlessness, and an unperturbed state of mind under all conditions show that one is advancing toward the spiritual goal. He also lists some specific signs of spiritual progress and suggests some spiritual exercises. An explanation of lights and visions during mystic experience followed. Sivananda explained these phenomena as encouragements to convince one of the existence of supra-physical, metaphysical, realities. He cautioned those experiencing these visions to remember that they are not the goal of meditation and to continue on until the mind engaged in meditation vanishes.

There is also a description of the seeds and fruits of Karma, Bhakti, Hatha, Raja and Jnana Yoga. These capsule explanations (or descriptions) make evident the differences between these various paths of Yoga.

Given over to a spirit of categorization and to the mission of making for a consistency in thought, Judith ranges in a series and summarises the leading points around which the discussion of Sivananda on Yoga veers.

Now, finally the actual subject of the book is reached. The rest of the volume is mainly devoted to the title subject: Yoga for the West. The main points of this discussion can be summed up in several sentences: God is the living, unchanging, eternal Consciousness that underlies all names and forms, and that holds all together. The goal of life is God-realization. Yoga can lead man to this God-realization.

Sivananda describes Yoga as an exact science, the discipline of the mind, senses, and physical body. He says it teaches man the method of uniting his individual soul with the supreme soul, of losing your individual will in the Cosmic Will; through Yoga, a man can control all the subtle forces of the body and utilise all his latent faculties. Everyone has inner potentialities and undiscovered capabilities. Yoga can awaken these dormant powers, allowing the full reality of one's inner divinity to be evident in his daily life. A realized Yogi loses all of his weaknesses and limitations as the full awakening of his divine attributes occur.

Several pages are devoted to explaining the various proofs for the existence of God. Sivananda says it is obvious that

from the beginning of creation a mysterious and miraculous power has been at work. Prove the existence of this power however you like, call it whatever you may, but meditate upon it. Since the nature of this Power or God in Christian terminology, is eternal Consciousness, the key to peace is the realisation of this supreme Being behind the world-show. Peace should be sought within.

Sivananda gives the first part of Yoga practice as the purification of the mind. One must first conquer and control the external and internal nature; then he is ready to seek the realization of the divine Consciousness. One should live a simple vigorous, and active, life as he endeavours to ignite the spiritual dynamo within himself. Some "Guiding Lights" are set down as moral and ethical maxims to be followed by those attempting to control their external and internal natures. Sivananda seems to believe fully the idea that a pure mind can only be found in a purified body.

Sivananda explains Pranayama as the control of the vital energies by the control of the respiratory organs. Describing Prana as the essence of whole life, the subtle principle which evolved the cosmic universe into its present form and in push-

ing it toward the ultimate goal, Sivananda says he who conquers Prana by way of Pranayama conquers the whole world. Presenting his self-culture, Sivananda advocates moderation in nourishment and exercise, control of energy and will, highest ethical and spiritual pursuits, psychic development, and emphasis on the spiritual. He explains meditation as the keeping up of an unceasing flow of God-consciousness.

The quickened, nimble and seeking intelligence of Judith has not only gained a good grounding in Yoga as a science of integral self-culture and all-round self-development, as a discipline for the awakening into action, of the highest powers latent in the deeper layers of human consciousness, but has come to equate a successful meditation with an unbroken continuity of the consciousness of God in which the meditator keeps himself.

Sivananda defines Cosmic Consciousness as the perfect awareness of the oneness of life. The realized Yogi sees Cosmic Consciousness everywhere as, Sivananda says, a man who in wearing green glasses sees green everywhere; this Yogi will have cosmic wisdom and cosmic feeling. Since this perfect awareness of the oneness of life occurs only to the realized

Yogi, Sivananda seems to say that Yoga is the supreme religious path.

My personal gain from this book is twofold: I am now more completely informed about the activities at Ananda Kutir, and about the basis, value, and uses of Yoga. I have also gained understanding of Sivananda's religious movement and his attempt to explain and describe Yoga in in English language. I see the basic problem inherent in the transfer of a religious idea from one language to another, and from one culture to another. For Sivananda was forced to use the word God to stand for eternal Consciousness. I have also learned that Sivananda would have Western people take the whole of traditional Yoga, not merely the meditation-aspect of it. He advocates for us Yoga Asanas, the physical exercises, Pranayama, concentration, and meditation, for achieving the goal of awareness of the oneness of life, the union of the individual soul with the supreme soul that is Brahman.

—*Judith Ann Hoffman.*

Chapter Eight

Sivananda and Barney Gilmore

The ability to communicate his ideas with extraordinary ease and effect, the challenging coverage of the themes, types and subjects of Yoga, the untiring energy in the devoted service of humanity, the psychology of Nishkama Seva he has constructed and that aids the readers acquainted with Chinese thought grasp the psychological foundations of the morality of *I-ching*—these, among the others of Sivananda that leave upon the mind of Barney Gilmore, the impact of a lasting impression. Mental exhilaration results from encountering such thoughts, and the play of such ideas, as enlarge our horizons of perception, as extend the field of our discernment, as suddenly lit our vision upon some fact in the true psychology of man, or some facet of the universal vital phenomena, or yet on some factor explicative of the immensity and the complexity of the cosmos; hereunder, the predilections and intellectual questionings of Barney Gilmore find enough in Sivananda Literature, that helps him tumble upon elements of 'excitement', rather upon points of noetic interest and of an edifying influence, that reveal dimensions to man, and aspects to

things, which the West seldom thinks possible of existence, and deserving of attention.

SWAMI Sivananda's *Yoga Samhita* presents the teachings on Yoga he gave, for the most part, during his stay at the University of Roorkee, in 1957. Beginning with a prayer, it contains discussions of what Yoga is, and of its universal merits. Then follows a series of very short articles giving the immortal teachings of Sivananda, and some short messages designed as spiritual awakeners. The first four Mandalas of Yoga Samhita, treat of the four types of Yoga. These four are Jnana, Raja, Bhakti, and Hatha Yogas. Next he treats of Sankirtan and Karma Yogas. Then appear discussions of the Yoga of Synthesis, Adhyatma Yoga, the spiritual psychology of the practical methodology of Hindu realization, and the fruits of Yoga. Finally, there come discussions of Yoga for health, education, the practical way to realization, the characteristics of the Jivanmukta and the Videhamukta, and the essence of Yoga and Vedanta.

This is a tremendous coverage of the field of Yoga. I was able to read a great part of it and was greatly impressed at

the amount of material needed to cover adequately the topics. I gathered that the four main types of Yoga were Karma, Raja, Jnana and Bhakti. In the discussion of Yoga and its fruits, at page 246, these four are described as to their methods of achieving realization, and we learn that the man of action should pursue Karma Ycga, whereas the man of devotion should pursue Bhakti Yoga, etc. Then, we are clearly made aware of the importance of continued practice of Yoga. The great merits deriving therefrom are treated at length.

Inherent in the critical survey Barney Gilmore makes of the imposing treatise, the Yoga Samhita of Swami Sivananda, a rich understanding of the rudiments of the fundamental needs of the evolving Mind in man.

I felt after reading the second part of the book, the part dealing with Yoga directly, that the author was able to communicate his ideas and points extraodrinarily well. I might say that I was a bit overcome by the volume of his discussion which I was able to absorb without undue concentration. Due to my personal interests, I was most absorbed by the discussion on the psychology of Hindu Realiza-

tion. The treatment in this chapter brought about an increasing awareness of the power of the mind and its control over our lives. The same principles used by those that practise Jnana Yoga Sadhana, are just being "discovered" in modern life, by people in advertising, and writers of books with the philosophy expressed in *The Rainmaker.*

An advanced scholar that Barney Gilmore is, he contributes to us his own conception in relation to Sivananda's thesis on Karma-Yoga as personality-overhaul by selfless action, a conception that is controvertible for the purpose of revaluation.

The need for Love as expressed in such "modern" works as *Love or Perish,* and acclaimed by certain psychologists, is certainly made apparent in Sivananda's treatment of the psychology of Bhakti Yoga. Karma Yoga as a "personality-overhaul" was a very interesting comparison to what I would call perhaps self-psycho-analysis by action. Extending Sivananda's treatment of the psychology of Nishkama Karma to include *Wu Wei,* we can see also the psychological foundations of the morality of the *I-ching.* But

perhaps I am straying too far from what Sivananda intended. He summarizes his chapter by saying that the Sage, by use of psychology has arrived at a totally spiritual plane. This is an exciting thought. Verification of it, if it be true, would, however, be of slight importance. The other chapter which, I feel, I took away a great deal from, was his chapter on education, directed to the student. I was greatly impressed by the chapter. I found it easy to agree that education should be "supported" by religion or complemented with religious study.

Humanity assesses the greatness of a contemporary great Man in terms of the measure of good, cheer, peace, comfort, light he brings to it, and Time judges the duration of that greatness by the amount of energy, will and force with which such beneficent works were wrought.

The forcefulness of the ideas in the hands of Sivananda, also made a great impression on my mind. I found this book much more readable than his pamphlets, in the sense of being integrated treatments of a specific topics. The energy and devotion to humanity, shown by Sivananda, as

witnessed in the letters to him printed in the book, is indeed an amazing and admirable thing. I can honestly say I look forward to finishing the few remaining chapters I have yet to read.

—*Barney Gilmore.*

Chapter Nine

Sivananda & Elizabeth Marshall

Singling out an excellent example of the methods for the conquest of mind and the emotions of anger and passion, Sivananda has framed from the rich resources of his inner wisdom and experience, Elizabeth Marshall deduces an inference on the indubitableness of Sivananda's knowledge of the basic psychology of human nature; but, gifted as Elizabeth is, with perspicacious mental powers and a high reasonableness, she would readily agree that the inference, as the logical end borne by the premises would indicate, ought to centre round the certainty of Sivananda's genius at the psychology of the most sane and effective methods for encountering and defeating the deeds of the original and ancient Ignorance within the bosom of man, and for a self-conquest and growth of the attributes of Godhead latent in the exertions and the acts of the aspiring human consciousness.

Since the principle of arousing the generality of mankind to an increasing awareness of the numberless inner resources it commands within

itself, for peace, ease, happiness, achievement, and development, dictates, dominates and maintains the mission of Sivananda, Elizabeth Marshall is, in a way justified in being reminded of Norman Vincent Peale while reading Sivananda.

WHILE reading Swami Sivananda's work, *Mind: Its Mysteries and Control.* I was reminded of Norman Vincent Peale's "cure all" books which have been profitably peddled on the common market. At one place in the book, this statement appears: "Man is born to be happy....but he can't be happy when his mind is externalised." The purpose of this book is to define what true happiness is, i.e., the discovery of the Atman, and to chart the path for finding this supreme Consciousness. By answering the question "How", Sivananda is assured of some popularity in the Western world.

The first question which Sivananda poses is, "What is mind?", and proceeds to answer it by summarizing the beliefs on mind, of different branches and schools of Hinduism, which range from, "the mind is a manifestation of Atman" to "the mind is a bundle of habits". I am inclined to

think that he considers the mind a bundle of habits for when he defines Karma, this statement appears: "The mind has, on account of your past Karma, a tendency to act in a certain way....most of your actions are done more or less automatically."

From within Man a Sage emerges, when he demonstrates to us by the epic of his deeds, and illustrates to us by the story of his life, the Wisdom and the Power of the Self, the highest dignity, destiny, and delight of existence; but then, what type of a Sage is Sivananda and what his distinctive attributes, it remains for the bright-eyed scholar and critic, Elizabeth Marshall to say.

Sivananda is that type of a Hindu who believes in leading an active life even after one has found Enlightenment; consequently, he has published scores upon scores of books in an effort to bring peace and happiness to others. He displays the utmost tolerance towards other religions as is evidenced by his inclusion of the Sermon on the Mount as an effective formula for purification of oneself at the Yama and Niyama stages of Yoga. Moreover, he refers to Jesus and Buddha as Lord Jesus and Lord Buddha.

Sivananda lists the views on the mind and says that the ways to overcome mind are by recognition, conscious and active effort, and Yoga. An excellent example of his methods is found in the section on passion. A passionate person he states, will be able to decrease his desires, *one,* by fasting, *two,* by not reading romantic novels, *three,* by keeping good company, *four,* by keeping the mind active in other fields. Whether or not, Sivananda has achieved Enlightenment, he has certainly gained a knowledge of basic psychology and human nature.

The context of present international discord makes the teaching of Sivananda stand out in welcome relief and become more widely meaningful—Elizabeth Marshall has a word on Sivananda's Humanism and Humanitarianism.

It was particularly interesting to me to read the introduction to this book, in which all the writers stressed the importance of Sivananda's teachings by drawing our attention to the international discord and the impending third world war, and by stressing the need for his message. Sivananda's teachings concerning humanism and humanitarianism, stood out in welcome relief. —*Elizabeth Marshall.*

Chapter Ten

Sivananda and Catherine Terry

More than the alluring invitation by a presentation of an imposing view of the endless powers and potentialities man carries within the graded realm of his consciousness, it extends to the awakened and self-conscious humanity in the West and in the East, Yoga commands the attention and activity of the generality of mankind by the varied immediate utility it has, a listing of some of which forms the concluding portion of the review of Sivananda's *Hata Yoga,* Catherine Terry transcribes hereunder, with a suggestion towards her observation of the soundness of Sivananda's guidance for Yoga-practitioners and on the fact, that any genuine unfoldment of the spiritual awareness and its energies presupposes a long-continued discipline by, and a perfection in the expression of, a diversity of ethical excellence.

Wise Catherine, for all her critical acumen, refuses to give herself to a prying into the demerits, or to growing into an emotional eloquence on the merits, of the literary trappings and guises through which Wisdom and Light

reach her—she has her interests lead by a personal understanding, and a personal venture into the practice, of Yoga.

THE bulk of Swami Sivananda's *Hatha Yoga* is concerned with the explanations of Asanas, Pranayama, Mudras, Bandhas and Kriyas. Each pose or practice was described at length, and each bore a long list of benefits if practised steadily. These are self-explanatory, and this report will be concerned more with the sections on the importance of Hatha Yoga.

A man must seek an accord with nature: by obeying the laws of health, he follows the laws of Nature. Good health is a prerequisite for spiritual pursuits. Swami Sivananda thinks that of all the Yogic systems, Hatha Yoga is the most perfect for physical exercise. It brings physical perfection and the ability to concentrate and meditate. The effectiveness of the practice depends on the regularity of the schedule. Hatha Yoga prepares the student for Raja Yoga. Sivananda warns not to be impatient if there is a delay in the descent of Divine Grace, and that we must be contented because we are bound to succeed in the aim of Yoga which is

eternal bliss.

There is a section on the Chakras and the upward ascent of Mind, Prana, Jiva, and Kundalini from Chakra to Chakra. When Kundalini is awakened, the aspirant develops psychic powers and sees visions. Apparently, it is easy to awaken Kundalini if one is "courageous, devotional, humble, generous, merciful, pure and dispassionate." A diligent Yogi will be able to absorb energy and help preserve the body. The idea behind this acquired longevity seems to be that if he can postpone death at will, he will be free to do his Yoga Sadhana and gain the goal of life in one birth. The will has the body at its mercy. The idea being that the body is manufactured by the mind and therefore subject to its decisions. Sivananda sees concentration as the only way to divorce oneself from worldly troubles and miseries. The mind must first be purified through Yama and Niyama.

The West has yet to assimilate the lesson that complete relaxation and concentration have a high spiritual value—Catherine sees it, and moves onward to pronounce the opinion on the possibility of taking up the practice of Yoga in the manifold gradation of its utility.

THE entire book, *Hatha Yoga,* was

intensely interesting. On the superficial level, I enjoyed practising the Yoga postures, and reading the benefits derived if they are done correctly. Aside from that, I can see the spiritual value of complete relaxation and concentration. Some of the medical advantages are quite logical, and I can understand how the practice of Yoga can be taken at several levels of usefulness and understanding—for toning up the body, increasing concentration, leading a moderate life, and as a step towards Raja Yoga.

—*Catherine Terry.*

Chapter Eleven

Sivananda and Jean Ward

The definitions of God formulated by the force of Sivananda's inner realization, render them difficult of doubt and debate, throw up pointers to the only and unfailing sources of human happiness and peace, sources that are convincing and acceptable to our inmost reasonings, show a readiness to vary the disciplines of self-development to suit the mood and the stress of conditions rather than commend a thumb-rule and a resistance to circumstances that ends by an abrogation of the very disciplines,—these elicit into action the attentive thought of, and evoke an admiration from, Jean Ward, who claims by implication a completeness of the ensouling logicality as turning the arguments of Sivananda for the existence of God, acceptable even to the habitually sceptical West, gives a verbal dressing to her inference of the extremely vital nature of the person of Sivananda from the great deal of power with which he writes, and affirms that his works make for the best understanding of the theoretical framework of Yoga and of the reasons that account for the extensive appeal of the Yoga practices.

Convinced that Sivananda's work affords her the best understanding of the fundamentals of Yoga and their appeal, Jean Ward abandons the argumentative attitude that accomplishes little and loses much, lifts off her eyes the glasses that find lacunae where normal vision sees none, and settles down to something like a satisfactory interpretative epitomization of almost the entire work, "Yoga for the West".

AMONG other things, first part of the book *Yoga for the West,* contains several poems written on the Swami, and is followed by a section written by Sivananda himself, and is entitled 'Marks of Spiritual Progress.' Herein, Sivananda lists some signs for recognition of your spiritual progress; they all seem to be centred round the spirit of detachment which you take to your surroundings, and deal with your preference for the spiritual over the corporeal. Apparently, one is also to experience a sharpening of one's discriminating power.

The signs of spiritual progress are also listed. Evidently, as one progresses, one becomes the picture of health, an admirable being in every way. In the next section, Sivananda speaks of the mystic ex-

periences, and explains the experience of the presence of the bright lights as one advances in Yoga, and also indicates the manner in which these lights should be regarded. All this has been in the preface-section of the book.

The first chapter of the *Yoga for the West,* is entitled, 'This is Yoga.' "Yoga is an exact science. Real Yoga is the attainment of the highest divine knowledge through conscious communion with God." Here he tells his readers that Yoga is a wonderful way of life; it is implied that it will solve all your problems—mental, physical and spiritual.

In the second chapter, he writes that "Existence is God;" thus, since your own existence cannot be denied; God unquestionably exists; He is the ultimate cause." "God is the unseen Seer, the unheard Listener, the unthought Thinker, the unknown Knower."

Swami Sivananda continues writing that Law in the universe is the expression of *God's Will.* He exists, whether or not you accept his existence, has nothing whatever to do with his existence. As knowledge of God is the "supreme panacea" the

goal of life is God-realization, says Swami Sivananda. "Purification of the mind is the first part of Yoga practice." All unpleasant thoughts must be abolished; we must begin with a clean state, the corners of our minds carefully dusted out, says the Swami.

And "Peace is within." Stop seeking for it in others; look inward! he tells us. How true ! He then writes to say that we should meditate while we are quiet and relaxed. He allows that we may sit in a chair, for meditation; but he expresses his obvious belief in the advantages of Yogic posture for meditation. He suggests that we should begin practising meditation by concentrating on a picture of Jesus, drinking in every detail of his form and figure, thinking constantly of Him. Sivananda advises us to treat all "bothering" thoughts, with indifference, as this will make for their passing away.

At the beginning and the end of the book are published letters from devotees of Sri Swami Sivananda. I was interested in the fact that many of them are from Australia. One lady in particular was the author of several of the letters, and seems

to regard the Swami as her *guru,* Master, the means of solution to all her problems; her letters drip with devoted emotion.

In this book, I feel that the Swami makes a few allowances for our Western traditions. I could scarcely believe my eyes as I read about meditating on the picture of Jesus! And he seemed willing to accept a sitting position for meditation, that is much more comfortable for us Westerners. I felt that his arguments for the existence of God, though brief, were quite logical and acceptable to me, and were the most convincing part of the book.

The Swami writes with a good deal of power—he must be an extremely *vital* person !—one feels that in reading this work of his—and this feeling is supported by the amount of working he has done in distributing his literature.

A deeper analysis discloses that the problems of modern mankind are fundamentally the same as the problems of accient humanity, despite the newer forms they assume and the greater complexities they are constrained by modern circumstances, to show on the surface—the way to resolve them, Jean Ward tells from her copy of Sivananda's Yoga for the West, is one

beaten by rigorousness, an ordeal, a sublimation, a transformation; but, the reward is incomparably greater than the pains involved.

This book presents a rather general picture of Yoga, I feel. It seems to make its appeal on an intellectual level, primarily—it presents a panacea, a remedy for our problems, a way to eternal happiness; but the way is rigorous; we must sublimate our physical natures. We must discipline our minds; we must rise at 4 a.m. daily, etc. But it will no doubt be worth it—a wonderful life, peace, contentment, a vibrant personality. For us Westerners, the latter must be greatly emphasized over the former facet of Yoga. I feel that a reading of this book has actually helped me to a better understanding of Yoga theory and its appeal.

—*Jean Ward.*

Chapter Twelve

Sivananda and Robert Ishikawa

The surprise of Robert Ishikawa has for its evocative objective the condition of inspiration commanded by Sivananda as a state normal to his mind, a state from which he makes all his "thought-provoking and insight-giving statements"; but these statements, Robert Ishikawa, reasons further, are, for all the provocative and illuminative power they are charged with, not only far from being 'clouded by an air of grave seriousness', austerity, solemnity, but also reveal the services of a lively sense of humour Sivananda constantly requisitions, and an evident pleasure, an obvious joy and a contageous delight he manifests in each expression of existence, and if these form the fruits of a full-orbed spiritual enlightenment, Robert Ishikawa is certain, everyone would want to attain it, and we would say, particularly the Indian in the Westerner, for, only the Western temper has a constitutional flavour for such fruits, whereas the contemplative mind of the Easterner would find them least alluring, and the being of that which produces them the most absorbing.

Unless an all-galvanizing enthusiasm, an inspiration that renders one all-dynamic, a force of will that accomplishes with incredible speed everything that it is intent on,....become the settled and normal nature of the great such as Sivananda, they would never be so great.

THE pamphlet of Sivananda which I received was more or less an unusual issue —it was a sort of day to day diary of the occasional statements made, and actions performed, by Sri Sivananda, in his normal everyday life. It quoted statements he made verbatim and also gave the exact time such statements were made (i.e. 10: 12 a.m.), and, then, added a sentence or two, on the insight Sri Sivananda showed in making each of such statements.

What I derived from this issue was, the surprising fact that inspiration could be derived by Sri Sivananda without any seeming effort on his part. He just makes these thought-provoking and insight-giving statements, as naturally as we would talk informally to a friend over a cup of coffee. His statements, however, are not thereby austere, solemn, and clouded with an air of grave seriousness. On the contrary, most of his statements show a lively sense of

humour and thorough enjoyment of life. How he can seemingly sustain this spirit of good humour and insight all day, and day after day, is beyond my conception. Yet it is demonstrated, in this pamphlet which covers an interval of his life of about two weeks.

Statements are made that just would not be expected in a religious pamphlet. For example, there was a short paragraph in which a nurse in his hospital made a comment about how he inspired in his workers a new type of Yoga—Bed-pan Yoga—which made it even enjoyable to clean bed-pans. On being shown a new children's book, he made a comment on how it would be enjoyed by "moustached children", that is, grown-ups with a childish mind.

Pale and mauldin faces are not the faces of Indian Sages—they are, in truth, death-defying and miracle-working Men who make of every moment of their lives a Wonder, a Splendour.... and every second of other people's lives, a blessing, a benediction, a beauty steadily growing into final beatitude.

Sivananda seems to derive a thorough enjoyment from life, and his existence is

an example of productive happiness that is to be envied. If this is what Samadhi can give, everyone should want to attain it.

—*Robert Ishikawa.*

Chapter Thirteen

Sivananda and Dicksie Schmitt

Grounded in the deepest insights into the entire psychology of human nature, human need, and human urge towards something as yet ill-understood and undefined in the West that has a fantastic knack of evading the fundamental Issue of Life, the eternal interrogation that seats itself upon the face of fair or spoilt existence, by an easy resort to reason, an easier appeal to science, and an excusable preoccupation with economy, politics, commerce, the urge that diversifies itself in daily human life, into a hundred demands, demands for happiness, for peace, for power, for pleasure, for perfection, for plenty, for progress, the practical metaphysics of universal Indian spiritual disciplines, has exercised the prerogative of its genius in making the very best provision to the varying mood, the differing temperament, the individual need of the human Mind, for the right direction of that urge, the fulfilment of that goal that is implied in all the hundred expressions of that urge, for the achievement of that which it seeks and knows not what it seeks, for the

obtainment of that which is the ultimate Destiny of all that is, and has, through the centuries provided the Man born in the Western zones, and brought up with blinkers on, the blinkers of the traditions of denominational religions, by assertion and by ready resource, that there are more roads to Enlightenment than one, and, what is more, as many roads as there are individuals on earth, —and if the individual types are broadly classifiable into four, four are the main divisions of Yoga—and that the specific disciplines for each are obtainable from it.... The capture of an inkling of this fact through Sivananda, by Dicksie Schmitt, can be found hereunder.

A species of elucidatory report from Dicksie Schmitt, on Sivananda's Yoga practices for daily life—

SWAMI Sivananda's *Yoga in Daily Life* deals with the methods for performing Yoga, describing the four types of Yoga which are suitable for four different types of personalities—*Karma Yoga* for people of active temperament, *Bhakti Yoga* for people of devotional temperament, *Raja Yoga* for men of mystic temperament, with bold understanding and strong will-power, and *Jnana Yoga* for men of intellectual

temperament. It was interesting to me to see that there is more than one way to reach Enlightenment. Granted, the four types of Yoga are not so very different, really, but they do take into account the fact that men are of different personalities and that a method suitable for one is not necessarily the best for another. Of the four types of Yoga, *Bhakti Yoga* is suitable for a vast majority of persons, as most people are emotional. *Jnana Yoga* on the other hand, is suitable for a microscopic minority only.

The painstaking reporter is rich in his intellectual associations and quick at the perception of the basic facts of life in its processes of growth and progress, and presents by a comparision Sivananda's affirmation of the ethical perfection as the precursory condition of the development of spiritual Devotion.

An introductory chapter, "The Basis of Yoga" describes recommended diet and things for avoidance, as well as other essentials which are common to all the four systems. The next four chapters deal with the four previously mentioned types of Yoga. *Bhakti Yoga* is a system of intense devotion towards God. You can develop

Bhakti by eating simple food, wearing simple clothes, saying the right prayers over and over, repeating His name 21,600 times daily. Many admirable qualities—indeed, the very ones most espoused by Christianity—are requisite for the attainment of *Bhakti.* They are, to name but a few: a pure loving heart, faith, innocence, simplicity, truthfulness, humility. Also, there are some very wonderful thoughts on the place of women and the qualities most to be desired in a woman. Sivananda says that all evil qualities proceed from anger, and that if you can eradicate anger, all bad qualities will die of themselves. This is an interesting thought. He says further that once you make up your mind to tread the path of truth all sins will be destroyed. This is rather startling to one who has been brought up in the Christian tradition which believes that man, by his very nature, cannot be free from sin. However, a statement by Lord Krishna that "Know thou, for certain, that my devotee never perisheth', reminds one of Jesus's statement to the effect that, "He that believeth on me shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

The idea of Dicksie Schmitt that many of the

ideas in one of the chapters of Sivananda's work, agree with Western psychology needs to be examined and reconsidered before it can be accorded an acceptance; it becomes necessary to determine where and how such an agreement is found extant.

Karma Yoga is a system of serving God and others with one's whole heart, mind, and soul and without the thought of recompense. According to it, even the most menial task is sacred if performed with the right spirit and mental attitude. Selfishness is the bane of Society. The section on *Raja Yoga* was much deeper and harder to understand, as it dealt with the mind and its mysteries, and stated that mind is the greatest force on earth, and that he who has controlled his mind is full of power. Such a person can bring all minds under his influence, and diseases can be cured by psychic healing. With the help of the subconscious mind, you can change your vicious nature, by cultivating qualities that are opposed to undesirable ones. The sub-conscious mind is regarded by the system of *Raja Yoga* to be very important. Many of the ideas expressed in this chapter agree with Western psychology. *Jnana Yoga* deals with the development of will-

power and the expression of the Self, because the Self is an expression of the same one life, one existence, one *Sat,* one Reality that sustains all that breathes. You are not yourself, you are not male or female; all minds can be reduced to the one Cosmic Mind. Unity is eternal Life; diversity is death. Meditation is a very important part of *Jnana Yoga.*

The rest of the book went on, from here, to describe the proper postures, breathing exercises, prayers, meditations, and the ways of attaining celibacy, and yet there was much of philosophical import that helped me to identify the various systems.

–Dicksie Schmitt.

Chapter Fourteen

Sivananda and Betty Bass

The almost incredible many-sidedness of Sivananda's gift, resource, ability, interest, activity, service, life and message constitute a constant wonder to those that contact him, even those that are themselves extremely diligent by nature and all-round in development and in self-expression, and would not an intelligence intent on scanning for such reasons that would explain this phenomenon, find it no difficult task to discern that this manysidedness most eloquently attests the greatness, the integrality, the completeness of Sivananda's intensive experience of, and active participation in, the multiple Power of the Divine Being, that ultimate something which occasioned the birth of prophets, saints, sages, to prove by their lives the truth of its existence, and to found the many religions, and as many schools and systems of thought and discipline, for reaching it! And, who or what it is that Betty Bass discovers in Sivananda, but one who, as, she puts it, in a manner that would do great credit to any author who has established a reputation for keenness of perception and the beauty and power of

self-expression, is one that likes "to gather all aspirants in his arms and carry them to realization by sheer force of his benevolence and vitality"!

In a much-valued monogram on Yoga, that Sivananda contributed many years ago, to the two-volume edition of "Where Science and Theosophy Meet", he gave himself the privilege, which the sages of his towering stature alone can exercise, of presenting Yoga with the most persusasive stamp of rich personal experience, and with a high-wrought scientific attitude that comes only to those who labour incessantly at a self-conscious artistry in the attainment of utmost logical consistency and rational validity; and therein, he gave a special prominence to the psychological, dietic, therapeutic, and spiritual aspects of Yoga. Much of that presentation seems to have percolated itself into the Sivananda-book the brilliant Betty Bass studied, and reported on, only to blaze a new trail, by her quick-sighted views, for the new batches of the students of Sivananda Literature.

In the first few chapters of his *Yogic Home Exercises*, Swami Sivananda stresses the relationship between mind and body,

and the benefits to be derived from Yoga practices in increasing the health and efficiency of both the body and the mind. He points ot that an improperly functioning body inhibits mental clarity, and that transgession of certain laws of nature either mentally or physically, causes disturbances in the individual that are barriers to all higher development. He then proceeds to give a background of technical information on the physical structure and functioning of the body, in chapters on the skeleton, the muscles and organs and hormones, etc., so that, the reader will understand in later chapters, the references he makes to the beautiful effects of the various Asanas on the glands and the internal organs of the body.

The greatness of the idealistic, yet inseparably most pragmatic, Indian mind reveals a yet another of its outstanding achievements consisting in the control, it has established, for an over-mental experience, on the force that underlies and forms the phenomenon of the mental and all mental manifestations, by a sheer manipulation and conscious mastery over the sub-mental life-force locketed in the breath of all breathing beings—Sivananda's presentations

in, and variations of, the exercises that result in such an achievement. Betty Bass obviously, bears a bright testimony, in all that she writes, of her command over the basic principles of those disciplines.

Next he devotes some sections to the prescription of basic health practices. He favours cool morning baths, with no soap, —drying and vigorous towel rubbing. In addition to water baths for cleanliness, he recommends sun baths on the entire body accompanied by some *Asanas* and *Pranayama* exercises, when possible. In regard to sleep, he feels that six hours as sufficient for most people, but proceeds to advise a gradual shortening of the time to four hours, for serious Yoga students, with rising time set at four a.m.

Diet, he describes, as important in its effects on the nature of the individual. Vegetarian food is recommended as having the effect most attuned to Yoga practice, since it calms the personal nature and is healthful. In particular, he advises milk, fresh fruits and honey which he praises as having many beneficial powers. Fasting is also recommended not only as a bodily

purification, but also as assisting in mental purification, and, here, a reference is made to the way in which Gandhi practised it.

In the next part of the book, Sivananda prescribes a daily programme of fifteen minutes of Yoga-exercises, and proceeds to enumerate and describe in detail the various Yoga-postures. First, he gives the four Asanas for meditation, chiefly the *Padmasan* and *Siddhasana* that give the body a firm bodily position while meditating or practising *Pranayama*. Then he advises about six positions to be held for several minutes each, in the fifteen minutes exercise period. There are several choices of related positions; for example (1) starting with a seated position, bending forward for a spinal stretch, (2) then on the stomach stretched out and raising the legs to stretch frontal muscles, (3) then the headstand for changing the flow of the blood to head or the shoulderstand which stimulates thyroid, by fresh supply of blood; (4) followed by Padmasana with toes bent back, head touching floor to counteract strain of headstand, (5) then, a Mudra combining bending forward with deep breathing, (6) standing and contracting the abdominal muscles till they touch

backbone, (7) lying flat—the relaxing position that comes as the last thing to be done.

Sivananda advises the performance of these exercises at 4 a.m., upon rising; they are to be followed by *Pranayama* exercises —breathing in through one nostril, and out through the other, while thinking, at the same time, of positive forces entering the body and negative forces, being thrown out. Another is a series of deep rapid breathing in and out, followed by retention of the breath. He stresses the importance of breath-retention, by giving examples of how in moments of concentration, as in sports or important events, the breath is automatically suspended. In Yoga, he states, that the suspension of breath by *Pranayama* exercises, causes concentration of the vital force and heat which in turn arouses Kundalini.

This is the culminative purpose of the Yoga exercises—although they may be done for health purposes, their chief purpose is to prepare the body for a concentration of mental and life forces to arouse Kundalini and achieve a state of consciousness sometimes called bliss. For this reason, Sivananda constantly refers back to

the importance of the earlier stages of Yoga, *Yama,* and *Niyama;* for, these exercises are designed to be combined with a life or purification and aspiration. He then devotes an entire chapter to the importance of Brahmacharya—the re-channelling of the vital force to bring about higher mental force.

Toward the end of the book, he writes about relaxation, mental and physical, to bring about a peaceful, calm state of mind that is essential to the life of the Yoga student, and that forms a preliminary to right meditation. He gives several relaxing physical positions, and cites the example of a car to illustrate the economy of physical power. In several places he states that exercise stimulates the muscles and throws out Prana or vital force while Yoga Asanas tone the entire body and collect vital force which can be used to achieve higher states of consciousness.

After making a reference to the place where are found Sivananda's "most interesting statements on the re-organization of one's" whole scheme of life, for the specific purpose of achieving the ultimate End of existence implicated in the very processes of its progression, and a comment on his readiness to resolve by giving most prac-

tical advice on every problem known to human nature and experience in their upward unfoldment, Betty Bass proceeds to present in the second line of the last paragraph below, a line that reads like a didactic and cloquent line from Edward Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire"......

The appendix of the book contains some of his most interesting statements on the reorganisation of one's whole life for the purpose of achieving liberation from dualities in this life, liberation from Samsara in general, and finally, unification with Brahman. He is always ready with most practical and specific advice on everything, not only on the physical procedures but problems that airse in meditation, and on the difficulties that are encountered in the practices for moral purification.

As a person, we would find Sivananda, in this book, as one who would like to gather all aspirants in his arms and carry them to realization by sheer force of his benevolence and vitality. The positive force of the book and its emphasis on practical possibilities of achievements, deserve our highest esteem. To read it without being influenced would be comparable to reading a book on how to draw but never pick up a pencil. —*Betty Bass.*

Chapter Fifteen

Sivananda and Sarah Nosler

Unlike other Stanford University Scholars, Constance Thias and Sarah Nosler take a turn away from the Sivananda Literature and a turn towards Sivananda who, as our intimate and personal konwledge of his life and activity, would argue, embodies in himself the greatness of a heart that is full of the conquering power of all-inclusive Love, the greatness of a mind that owns in abundance the purifying rays of a wisdom above the farthest height of human knowledge, the greatness of a Will that exercises itself with amazing and sweet prowess in an unstinting giving of its energies, in self-sacrifice, in constant and spontaneous endeavour for securing peace, happiness, light and strength for men around it, the greatness of a Soul that wraps itself in an austere vision and a deep awareness of the transcendent Reality immanent in the essence of its own being, the greatness of aureate eyes tranquillized by an intimate experience of the universal consciousness, of the Spiritual Being in man.

The impassioned endeavour of Sivananda resides in plunging the powers of his fully awakened

spiritual Consciousness, as a Friend of all men, as an angel ministering to their needs, as a Guide to their moral and "religious' goals, in an energetic expression of himself in those tasks of the specially incarnate Godhead that are destined to result in a steady dispelling of mankind's spiritual ignorance, of its own inner resources for goodness and for enlightenment, in an increasing actualisation of the noblest potentialities treasured within its mind, its heart, and its soul.

SIVANANDA is a great contemporary Indian theologist and philosopher active in writing many books. He believes in speaking as little as possible so that everything one says will be what is of importance and has a great meaning. Any more words, are superfluous. He is very benevolent, kind, and takes pleasure in giving, although he has not much. One aspect of his doctrine can be seen here: *share what you have.*

Another important message in the Forest Academy pamphlet is that religion does not have to be completely solemn and dull. Everyone loves Swamiji for his sense of humour as well as for his kindness, sweetness and benevolence. Sivananda's

religion is not merely for India, but it encompasses the world. He has followers all over the world. He is a living example of the power and energy of a man who has achieved enlightenment; his many projects and benevolent acts are astounding. Sivananda's great inspirational message can be found partly in the way he lives, and in the example he sets to the less enlightened men. Besides that, he propagates the spirit of tolerance for all men, and for all faiths, and also the idea that all faiths have truth in them. Faith and enlightenment can play an active role in improving the world and the relationship between men.

—*Constance Thias.*

From Constance Thias the turn now shifts itself to the shoulders Sarah Nosler bears with great dignity and grace, for a derivation from the Stanford Studies in Sivananda Literature, of a biographical knowledge of the life of Sivananda.

Swami Sivananda has a message of good-will, love, and hope for his readers. He has founded his Ashram which now forms a small community, and provides a place where one could stay and seek spiritual enlightenment, attend lectures and

practice Yoga. Sivananda's type of Yoga is Karma Yoga, "action Yoga" as opposed to Meditation-Yoga. He has attained spiritual enlightenment for himself, and is now, through extensive work, actively helping others attain it. He writes books, meditates, gives guidance and cares for a continual stream of people who come to him.

Something of the epigramatic power, beauty and form of self-expression in the English language, Sarah Nosler is bound to acquire, and throws up several traces in what is written below, indicative of a tendency towards such an acquisition.

Sivananda's writings are of a universal nature; his message is that of the love, work, devotion to mankind and meditation on the Miracle of Being. He wants people to find themselves, to become aware, and get more from life. His writings in his Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy Weekly are full of parables, verses, small stories, etc., about the Self-realisation, Sages, and the way of finding the Divine Being. They also contain practical examples from and anecdotes from his own experiences and on one's life and duties. He writes for all, and is dynamic, prolific, and devoted to others.

—*Sarah Nosler.*

Chapter Sixteen

Sivananda and Charles Plunkett

Nowhere in the entire gamut of indology and of the mystic literature of the modern East, do our researches find such a luminous wealth of meaning, suggestion and significance poured into a few simple explanations furnished by Sivananda, of the principle of non-attachment, and nowhere in the history of the saints and sages of the world are we furnished a greater instance than Sivananda, that illustrates in life the rewards and benefits of non-attachment.

Bound to bring credit and honour to the standards of Stanford University are such young scholars like Charles Plunkett who hold in their palms the gifts of sharpened intelligence, and lay their claims to becoming first-rate critics, earnest seekers after Light wherever found, and genuine custodians of higher human knowledge, for all humanity.

THE Indian principle of non-attachment is remarkably adjusted to overcome the claims of the senses on the individual. If non-attachment, or non-desire for the

fruits of action, is obtained, then nothing can disturb. For a long time, I confused the state of non-attachment with indifference when I should have thought of neutrality. Indifference as a goal is unobtainable, for there is nothing in the individual to drive toward indifference except ignorance. In the Indian system, a person neutral toward what he is doing may still be joyful, for he is doing what is right for him to do. His duty is the key to his joy. To summarise: Non-attachment to work *does not mean indifference.* Selfless actions are not soulless or heartless actions. Put your heart and soul joyfully in all that you do.

An individual can be completely neutral toward whatever his task or his condition or his sensual reaction may be, but may still be happy in the transcending joy that comes with awareness of proper place. I may be neutral in my desire to write or not to write this report, but I am happy in the knowledge that I am doing what is right for me to do.

An unusual psychological soundness and a high degree of positivity characterise the Indian approach to the conquest of the alien force of

Evil that has found its lodgings in the breast of man—the rhythm upon which the whole principle of self-conquest in Sivananda literature is laid, is not merely "resist not evil" but "get more absorbed in the pursuit of greater and yet greater good".

The Indian system is practical if taken in its own context—as far as possible in my limited knowledge rather than in the Western-Christian context. For example, Sivananda does not tell his disciple to fight against lustful thoughts, but to push them out by replacement with good thoughts. Recognition of psychological factors is implicit. The individual who sees a lovely girl and experiences thoughts of lust aroused by the sight, cannot rid his mind of these thoughts by thinking, "I will not think of that girl again." This will only more firmly establish the mind-picture of the girl. To remember to forget is an impossible act. To replace evil thought with good thought may be accomplished with constant practice.

Do not fight with evil. Replace it by the opposite good and automatically the evil will vanish. Do not try to drive away impure thoughts. *The more you try, the*

more they will return. Entertain pure thoughts.

Thus, not merely a command to be pure of thought is given, but a practical method of obtaining the desired goal is suggested. This above example sounds similar to the Christian idea of the choice between a lesser and a greater good which has unfortunately, I personally believe, died out in the Western tradition.

—*Charles R. Plunkett.*

Chapter Seventeen

Sivananda and Robert Rees

Liberated in spiritual Consciousness, formally delivered from all the manacles of human limitations and Self-ignorance, this Argus-eyed Sage of colossal spiritual capacity, it would seem to the inquiring intelligence, is living and labouring on a large scale for the general good of mankind, for the conscious, and therefore rapid, inner evolution and progress of the thinking but never-adequately-wise mortals in this eternally troubled and sobbing world of soul-making suffering. This, then, is the type of a Sage that the young men and women of learning in the Stanford University would have for the world they live in. Where, then, in cultural aspiration, and need is the West different from, or any less than, the spiritual East?

Indicative of Sivananda's great activity is his daily life in his Ashram, devoted to multifarious works. Sivananda sees many peoples, most of them are foreigners from different lands, and has followers all over the world. In this particular issue of the Weekly that I got, we find among his disciples at the Ashram, a Frenchaman, a

lady from Israel, an American lady, and so on. By exchange of ideas he makes apparent the truth. The lesson from this issue, that I derived emerged from Sivananda's talk with a young woman who aspired to know more about the Hindu religion and Sadhana, to which Sivananda replied in a question-form and asked her to practice Yoga and other exercises, so that she could come to know through personal experience.

—*Charles Ferhune.*

Happily for the scrambling twentieth century world of world-wars, multiplied vital pleasures, mechanical progress, soulless specialists, distraught technicians, this Sage Sivananda, rated by a consensus of competent judgment and opinion, the greatest of the living builders of the inner life of humanity, this Spinozistic deity is seen present everywhere, more in the divinely operative intensity of his own extended spiritual consciousness, in the minds and lives of hundreds of men around the world as a Name that bestows peace, comfort and strength, as a shaping force fashioning them after the image of the Divine, a guiding light leading them to the fulfilment of life in personal 'religious' experience, than in the instructing and trans-

forming printed pages of his innumberable publications that are distributed widely.

Sivananda as a Karma Yogi, believes in action as necessary even after you reach Samadhi, and that you should not seek merely knowledge as does a Jnana Yogi, or forget life and know only God as does a Bhakti Yogi. After reaching Samadhi there should be a definite worth to your outer life, and the good man does good deeds constantly. Knowing the true Self, the Atman and its relation to Brahman, one must do something positive. Life becomes fuller to the man who has realization, and the use and practices of Yoga are essential to get you there. Throw not the ladder away when you reach the roof; be industrious and productive and try to help others to know the ultimate meaning of existence. Godly man is to Swami Sivananda, a dynamic worker, and Sivananda himself is the best example of a Karma Yogi.

Sivananda, in the present work among many of his books, has concentrated primarily on the relationship between the Guru and the student. The Guru, of course, plays an important part in the Hinduism

of India, and the very many schools of that religion testify to that importance. Sivananda's message is primarily for the student. He admonishes the student not to be impatient and to realise that the Guru cannot work wonders in preparing the student for the discovery of the Atman. Thus one can gather that Sivananda, unlike people in the Western world, sees no reason for hurry and, rather stresses on long and arduous preparation.

Further Sivananda admonishes the student not to go astray or treat the Guru disrespectfully. Reminding the student that all of his actions will reflect upon the Guru, Sivananda states that the young people should behave in such a manner as not to embrass their Guru.

Perhaps what is particularly important, Sivananda's pamphlet when read by a novice, demonstrates clearly the importance of preparation for the attainment of Samadhi or for the discovery of the "I", or for becoming one with Brahman. Sivananda's instructions to students with which this pamphlet dealt, showed me, first of all, that the Hindu is not concerned so much with time and the immediate but rather with a thorough and careful preparation

and long work; this, also shows the Indian attitude to time and the stress the Hindu lays on what must be done *before* the Atman can be discovered.

—*Robert M. Rees.*

The argument of the irrefutable personal experience of most of us bears out that the appeal and the action of the sovereign influence of Sivananda whose self-luminous life is a continuum of divine iridescence, have been dovetailing into our daily lives an inner Yogic discipline, engendering in us yet higher aspirations, stimulating our slow-moving spiritual activity, graciously stretching the stature of our soul, and extending the power of our consciousness beyond the body we inhabit, beyond the limited thought of our rational mind, beyond the lure of our psychic powers, into the intensities and rich beauties of the Life Divine.

SWAMI Sivananda's Jnana Yoga I find very interesting. Self-discipline is needed and Yoga methods are no doubt very effective, no matter to what religion one adheres. In this work, Sivananda brings out the real meaning of worship. He says, "Worship God or Atman with the flowers of Jnana, contentment, peace, joy, and equal vision. This is real worship."

The basic aims of Hinduism and Christianity are somewhat the same. We are striving to know God through a deeper understanding of ourselves or the Self!" Ego is to be overcome; attachment with the world is discouraged; worship is imperative. In studying Sivananda's book, I see more and more the likeness between the Eastern and Western religions. I, and most people I think, get a misconception of other religions from an observation of the mass practices which do not truly represent the religious philosophy behind. I agree with a good deal of the Jnana Yoga philosophy of Sivananda, and I think that it could be quite beneficial to practise and learn from it as I strive to live a fuller, and more perfect, life within my Christian faith.

A few of the statements that I find helpful in Sivananda's books are: "Rigorous self-discipline and regular meditation will help you to fix your mind completely on the Eternal." "Have self-confidence. Develop independent judgment. Cultivate an indomitable will. Practise self-control and self-mastery." "An ounce of spiritual experience is better than tons of theories and study of spiritual books."

—*Helen Todd.*

Chapter Eighteen

Sivananda and Diana Wheeler

When written works wend their way towards us as the productions of a mind that carries no learning but bears the light of the Self-knowing omniscient Self within, that works by no intelligence except the power of Consciousness in which it poises itself, and which makes the intelligence what it is intrinsically, a mind permanently divorced from the varied form of ignorance, restlessly active in perception, in discernment, in discrimination, in Knowledge, in the experience of the soul of things, in the assimilation of the essentials, the fundamentals, the essences of all that is, of all that has been, of all that will be, constantly given over to wrap itself with, and find itself enwrapt in, the blazing Light of the Thought that is relentlessly awake in seeing things through and through, in seeing them whole, in seeing them as they should be seen, from the perspectives demanded, from the right standpoint, and by a vision apposite to the nature of Truth and in keeping with the soul of fundamental Knowledge, essential Knowledge, unalterable Knowledge, what type of literature is it that we find imprinted on

their visages? Let the brilliant dons much disciplined by the thought stored in the academical libraries, and perhaps as much schooled in life, and the scholarly students who have distinguished themselves as highly susceptible to the light wherever wisdom brings, the dons and the scholars of Stanford University who have risen to accord an attention to the works in question, feel equipped to pronounce the judgment on the exact nature, if not of the form, at least of the content, of such works.

Where Sivananda Literature is concerned, Diana Wheeler is content to concern herself merely with the role she plays of being a reviewer, but she concludes her brief review by quite a shrewd perception she gained into the very spirit of the narration Sivananda presented in the first person singular.

THE first section of the pamphlet dealt with an exhortation on what the nature of the Ultimate is. The second section dealt with the inspirational message. This told about the exercise of faith in life and the constant awareness of the Ultimate. Sivananda quoted passages from scriptures as supporting his statements. The finding of the Self is the highest fulfilment

of life. He tells about his activity during service and awareness, without any direct reflection or reference to any 'me' principle, rather to that "me" as a manifestation of the spiritual 'I' working through him as a felt power.

—*Diana Wheeler.*

According to Browne who displays a mental endowment best equipped for a just interpretation of Indian mind and view of life, the Hindu is distinguished by the clarity of his thought, the catholicity of his view.....Like a conscientious critic of Indian thought, Browne takes into the sweep of his examination, almost the whole of Indian outlook on life, and by this very reason finds himself in a position to see all sides, strike a balance, supply the gaps, perceive by a patient seeing the merits where the superficial view would be left with nothing but demerits, reconsider the ground he covers ere he pronounces a judgment thereon, and thus constitute in himself a striking contrast to the ill-mannered, ill-informed, lopsided, opiniated critics that dismiss the East as the pontiff of all negation of life, and Yoga as so much of a juggle with the feats of the body....May it not be that Browne is made to enjoy this advantage by virtue of his contact

with the clear, lucid, authentic, full-throated treatment Sivananda gave to the whole of Indian thought and would not those critics, had they a chance to study Sivananda's works, alter the countenance of their prejudiced views and approach afresh their themes?

SIVANANDA is a Hindu and his pamphlet is an excellent example of the clear thinking of the Hindus, as well as of their tolerance and understanding of human nature and mankind. Sivananda deeply desires to explain the beliefs as he feels they should be, without corruption, without trivialities. Sivananda feels that Yoga is all-important for the understanding of life, the Self, ultimate Being. He believes further that it is possible for man to escape from the wheel of Samsara, and attain Samadhi. However, he feels that total detachment from the world is not the right answer but rather it consists an active participation in the world. This action should be done without thought or craving for reward, without consciousness of personal self. Not only meditation, but good actions also, can influence your Karma, can change your life from an eternal Samsara, from eternal limitations to one of complete and final perfection.

—*Browne.*

Chapter Nınteen

Sivananda and Janet Swan

The kind of a conspectus of the Sivananda Literature that Kalajian, Berkeley Reid and Janet Swan present, makes, in its own way, an interesting reading. In all such literature what we need to look for, are the elements of enduring importance, lessons on life true anywhere, either in the West or in the East, teaching that covers, by its fundamentals, its light of guidance, the whole ground of life, and upon which, first of all, rest the factors of its greatness.

Force conjoined with grace, clarity commingled with suggestiveness, form the main advantages the brevity of expression in itself enjoys.

Berkeley Reid and Kalajian come to study those portions in Sivananda Literature that are characterised by beauty and simplicity of expression, and find the themes therein treated, centred round the principles of 'good life'....

I WAS at once amazed and pleased at the simpleness and beauty of his thought. My pamphlet contained some simple fables

whose morals centred about the "good life", i.e., of seeking knowledge, gaining personnal attainment, and obtaining that supreme Light. Most of these stories would be at home in any Sunday school—whether in the East or in the West.

—*Berkeley Reid.*

An analysis of what Berkeley said above in his last sentence, would easily show that the feature of the universality of the application of any teaching emerges from weaving itself into and out from those elements of experience, feeling, need, thought that are universally shared.

But Kalajian covers a ground comparatively greater than that of Berkeley, states succinctly the central message of Sivananda, refers to his description of different aspects of life in relation to Yoga-practice and the nature of the supreme Being, and observes that Sivananda, while explaining the phenomena of pain and pleasure, brings into his philosophy understones of psychology.

SIVANANDA writes in a beautiful, poetic style. He describes the different aspects of life, and treats of ethics, conduct, morals,

practice of Yoga, and the nature of the supreme Being. Sivananda says that pain and suffering is a mental affair. That is, he brings into his philosophy understones of psychology.

The soul of the greatness of a great soul is to be seen and measured in the Values it loves, it lives by and it delivers to all mankind as a light unto its feet of progress and development.

Wealth is not important; only the good life, morals and conduct is essential. He remarks about supermanhood. A man reaches over and above others, when he attains Nirvana—that is divineness in the eyes of others. He then, discusses questions of everyday happenings, such as conduct between husband and wife, questions about relationship between religious experience and service. Attaining of the Nirvanic state, is the highest ideal.

—*Kalajian.*

Janet Swan flies past the mission, the approach, the attainments of Sivananda, and leaves us with a conclusion carrying her observation on his Divine Life Movement as having its efforts directed towards the achievement of amity among religionists....a function worthy of any

distinctive literature such as his, and that assumes an urgency in a world which houses permanently many religions but not much accord.

MY SIVANANDA pamphlet included various articles such as the general background of the life of Swami Sivananda and his movement, the mission he has started, a copy of the speech he delivered, the basic tenets of his belief, and the rules and methods of becoming a Guru-bhakti Yogi. I learned that Sivananda, a Yogi who has scaled the heights in Samadhi, founded the Forest Academy which is a school for Yoga and Vedanta systems of philosophy. He has also been active in the Divine Life Movement which is striving toward the achievement of amity among religions. He stresses unity, love, brotherhood, etc. He seems to be mainly optimistic in his approach. His moderation-cadence in his speech is meaningful. A long list is given, of the regulation for the practice of Bhakti Yoga, and it is shown how Bhakti Yoga is not an inferior type of Yoga. Instructions are afforded on the student's relationship with the Guru.

—*Janet Swan.*

Chapter Twenty

Sivananda and Russell Edgerton

The standpoint of the philosophical message of Sivananda represented by Russell Edgerton, should be seen and understood in the light of the view that the phenomenal existence or the process of Samsara may be rated purposeless only in its ultimate sense—as it is, it is throughout teleologically determined, and for the individual himself as a phenomenal entity it cannot but present itself as characterised by purpose. To the Indian who is basically in no detail different from the Westerner, except in the attitude he applies to life, the maturity of soul he evidences in each of his self-expressions, the thought that habitually elicits the interest of his reflective moods, the richness of wisdom he has received as his heritage from the ancient dawns and through the parents to whom he is born and by whom he is brought up, the foundations of life never slip away, rather they are laid deep upon the Heart of Reality which reabsorbs into its own bosom what it has put forth as its froth and foam that the phenomenal world is.

No differences obtain between the Man in the East and the Man in the West, save that single,

fundamental, qualitative one consisting merely in a difference in the degree and stage of development and growth in wisdom, vision, view and in the kind of action and the style of life they engender....each of them evidences individually. If Tennyson were, all his life, a Tennyson who wrote,

> There rolls the deep where grew the tree.
> O Earth, what changes hast thou seen!
> There, where the long street roars, hath been
> The stillness of the central sea.
> The hills are shadows, and they flow
> From form to form, and nothing stands;
> They melt like mist—the solid lands,
> Like clouds they shape themselves and go—

and if Shakespeare were, all his life, a Shakepeare who wrote,

> Our pageant now is ended.
> The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on; and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep—

and if all Englishmen were, in this respect, all their lives, Tennysons and Shakespeares, and

if Tennyson and Shakespeare and all the Englishmen added to this strain of thought which they share with the Indian, the other note consisting in the Indian's unshakable faith in the unchanging Nature of the ultimate Reality which evokes all his devotion, holds all his attention, generates in his breast a bliss beyond human conception, surcharges his attitude with a positivity and a cheer that laughs at death and knows no pain and no misery, we would have in England the perfect India, the eternal India, the essential India, the true India.

Russell Edgerton has laid his finger right on the real trend in Sivananda's philosophy of world and life—by a broad view, the world may be said to be unreal, and only so far, as it is as changing as the moods of man, and as passing in its character and substance as anything around him, and in that it is not the ultimate reality the materialist and his disciples, the men of this world, are prone to take it to be, not a permanent, unchanging, something.

THE inspirational message of Swami Sivananda was mainly concerned with the doctrine of Yoga and a description of the goal of the Hindu faith, liberation from

Samsara. Having given up all else in pursuit of the ultimate insight, we can practise Yoga to achieve the final liberation in which the Atman becomes one with the Brahman. The 'I' is realised as the subject, not as the object of experience—the world is realised for what it is. Swami Sivananda belongs to the school which believes that the world, in bearing the divine imprint of Vishnu, is a reflection of the ultimate Reality. It does not necessarily have to be negated, but it does not exist in the sense that it is not the true reality.

In brief, Swami Sivananda's message is the way out of the purposeless existence of Samsara into the realisation of the Ultimate, a state in which the Atman becomes one with Brahman. Then, Sivananda describes the effects of this beauteous state on the individual.

—*Russell Edgerton.*

John Flahuty of the Stanford University gains from his studies in Sivananda Literature insights into the Indian mind, and a better understanding of the warm wings of philosophy with which India seems to cover the mind and soul of the world.

APART from giving me several insights into the Indian mind, the booklet of Sivananda, also gave me a better understanding of the Hindu philosophy. As I read it, it became clear to me that there were certain clear ideas about the meaning of life, and the way in which it should be approached, running through its text. In his answers to various questions that people raised, the great Yogi would not only try to explain his ideas, but would attempt to put the questioner's mind, more at ease, and more in harmony with his own. One could easily picture the world-view which lay behind the answers as one of a calm, serene world where everything was more clearly seen, when viewed with an air of detachment and passivity. We should not get too excited about misfortune in life; we should merely go along in our own way, doing the best we can to gain spiritual insight, and to help one another.

The code of ethics that was espoused in Sivananda's booklet, also impressed me and it seemed to me that the underlying premise of the ethical code was the same as that of Christian ethics, and that the two systems had many striking similarities. Both ethical codes are based on the idea

that man should love his fellow-men and that one improves his own spiritual position by so doing. This made me realise that the idea of the brotherhood of man is more universal than I had thought at first.

—*John Flahuty.*

Chapter Twenty-one

Sivananda and Thomas Denton

From what we know of this untiring benefactor of humanity, this Sivananda, many of us would be drawn to conclude, and state in terms apposite to a theological environment, that the symphonic rhythms of the dynamic mission of Sivananda are unmistakably formations from the numberless notes emanating from an exquisite coalescent activity of the Force of the fully descended Divinity and the ascended power of the transfigured and perfected humanity.

The eternally Self-discovered Self in man is the undiscovered Self for the human mind—whether in Socrates or in Sivananda, the same voice speaks to Man that is all mankind, the voice of the Self, the Self demanding, urging, and also laying down old yet new pathways for, that Knowledge of Itself within the inner shrines of the being of man formed of the luminous confines of human consciousness!

THE subject of treatment for Sivananda was the spiritual life of India today. The present-day brand of Yoga was dis-

missed. The spiritual message he had to give was essentially the importance of finding oneself. This message is applicable to anyone, Easterner or Westerner. The spiritual calm and cheerfulness of manner and character are two results of Sivananda's message.

—*Thomas H. Denton.*

Apart from registering hereon, a word on the inspiration Sivananda imparts for human aspiration towards the attainment of the ultimate Value in Life, Karen transcribes a line on the function he observes assigned to Sivananda's teaching, the function of revealing to us the Existence and Power of Brahman all around us.

SIVANANDA is a Karma Yogi who is active in many fields, and has written many books and pamphlets on religious feeling. He meditates for several hours every day and believes in the power of prayer for inspiration. According to the pamphlet we find that one can see Brahman everywhere, and this seems to be a view taken by several religious leaders. Sivananda also states, however, that one must first be awakened to this 'Miracle of Being' and then life will really begin. For attaining this 'awakening' is the highest goal and

after attaining this, life takes on a completely different form.

Sivananda, then, inspires one by his doctrine on the aspiration for this attainment and if one uses his life as an example to others to become at least a little more aware of this awakened state and also to be practical and help them get medicine and proper care. Sivananda's teachings show us the power of Brahman and His Existence all around us, so that should we want to live really, and not merely exist from day to day, we must awaken to this Brahman.

—*Karen.*

As a classic example of the synthesis of Jnana Yoga and Karma Yoga that Sivananda goes to Steig who feels that the former, notwithstanding his consummate spiritual attainment, has sought to devote his exalted energies to the weal and welfare of the world.

SWAMI Sivananda is a most remarkable man. He is a Karma Yogi, that is, an active Yogi, although he meditates five hours a day. He is a prolific writer and has three hundred books to his credit. He contributes articles to five magazines run

by him. He is very much interested in education and in helping people. He has started an Ashram and his spiritual condition is that of the state of Samadhi which enables him to use all the energy he possesses in his daily work. He is freed from all kinds of discriminations between men and men, of caste distinctions, from all those inhibitions that prevent most of us from using our mental and physical potential.

Above Steig has left us to reflect over his pertinent remark on those inhibitions that prevent most of us from using our mental and physical potential, inhibitions wholly absent in Sivananda who is also free from every form of discrimination between man and man.

Sivananda feels very strongly that the emphasis in religion should be on the "here and now". He has reached the state of Samadhi, and yet he devotes time and effort to his people. He is an example of the synthesis of Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga. He sees the importance of both the Yogas in spiritual life.

—*Steig.*

Chapter Twenty-two

Sivananda and Virginia Brooks

Accustomed to live constantly in the context of the Cosmic Being, articulate in utter loneliness the words of his wisdom, and his experience even to what the ordinary eye would dismiss as inane nothing, adjust himself to the standpoint of the all-seeing because Self-seeing Light within, of the omnipresent Reality that has everywhere the resting Ground for the infinitude of its existence, its consciousness, its delight, find the core of his own luminous being in the embodiments of all living things, and partake of the ecstatic delight born of such a life lived in such an all-dimensioned divine environment, by such articulation, by such an adjustment, and by such a discovery, how or what will the Indian, the Indian in Sivananda, or any other Sage as a matter of that, write?—Or, again, how or what shall he write, the Indian, the Indian in Sivanánda, this towering Sage, who has for his mansions the forests untrodden by man, finds in stones a Deity, in trees a Presence, in stars a Soul, in all that lives the very vortex of his own life, the Friend whose each movement breathes Peace to the East, Peace to the West, Peace to the North, Peace to the

South, whom all Nature acknowledges as its beloved, whose heart has not known a single wrong impulse, whose mind is a pool of a pervasive Light raised above all possibilities of casting a shadow, who owns a wealth which none, not the hand of Time itself, can deprive him of, but which shall announce itself through all the ages, commands such a fund of fundamental goodness that makes him have in the worst of his enemies the best of his body-guards, finds in the dacoit what he is, a dispenser of Justice, a tool, an instrument in the hands of a Judge who does not err, and whose error would mean the annulment of the law that sun shall rise in the East, that gravitation shall govern all things that fall, that each action shall have a reaction, sees in the robber his own menial fulfilling a task demanded by a circumstance in the world of limitations, shades, errors, evils, of self-limitation in knowledge and in goodness, receives, at worst, from the very idea of death itself, the thrill of a joy consequent upon a sudden intimation of the change into a better circumstance that permits a fuller action to the play of his Goodness, his Sageliness, his Light, his Love, his Life, has for his coat-of-arms the transforming power, the compelling force he exercises uniformly on all, gazes on, in the most repulsive face, the beauties of the

Divinity with which he is constantly in touch and in contact, experiences in all women the quintessence of all motherliness, personified Love, Service, Tenderness, Grace, auspiciousness, art, beauty, has lived a life in such a plenitude of the consciousness of the Divine, and by such disciplines of a Mind uplifted by wisdom, of a Heart ensouled by all-embracing Love, of an action ruled by austerity and Truth, that empowers him to affirm that nothing can happen to him save what he wants should happen to him, that he would find himself in no circumstance except the one that he has always willed, and always wanted to live in, that none can speak to him anything except what he would want them to speak to him, that none can do to him anything except what he had wanted, or will have, them do to him, and that wherever he may live, there can be found, for himself, and for others, an Enlightenment, a Peace, a Power, a Prosperity, a Progress, a Benediction, a Blessing, a Beatitude, a Grace, a Greatness...

From a repeated reading of, and a reflection over, the content of Sivananda's pamphlets, Virginia Brooks acquires a claim to see the kind of spiritual man that Sivananda is, and says that his vigour, his kindness, and his

spiritual insight are too obvious to be left unnoticed.

SIVANANDA has high reverence for God and praises Him, and says we must seek communion with the Divine. It is a great experience of bliss, and he who seeks and attains it, is rewarded; it is in itself the great Light that liberates all souls. From these pamphlets of Sivananda, one can see what a spiritual man Swami Sivananda is, and yet he is so very practical. The highest attainment enables one to do much good in the world, and to work hard; once Samadhi is attained, work will be a joy. The vigour, kindness and spiritual insight of Sivananda are evident.

—*Virginia Brooks.*

Mirrored in the mirth that exudes from the entire mood of Sivananda is the vitality and liveliness of the religion he is born into, observes Bopton and proceeds to say that Sivananda is primarily concerned with the elucidation of the essentials of life in relation to the Indian philosophical outlook.

SIVANANDA is not only a very religious man who takes joy in everything, but he

also has something to say about everything. It would be presumptuous of me to write an estimation of his pamphlets, since I have no connection whatsoever with any 'good' they do. It seems that they are written directly for the people, answering the questions they might ask. They are not philosophical essays, nor are they religious dogmas, rather something in between, a way of living is what they prescribe. Since they are neither of these, their effect is the important thing, and any estimate should be based on that.

They speak of Yoga in all its forms down by its essence in plain language understandable to anyone. Sivananda talks of Karma and Samsara, of the Devas and the Brahman very logically but all with joy. I should imagine that his pamphlets do complete their purpose.

Gifted with a capacity for comprehending within the few words he utters, great many details, Bopton pours for us, into a short paragraph a knowledge of the nature of Sivananda's attitude, the character of his writing, the positivity of his approach....

Sivananda's approach is positive and he speaks so happily about what he feels

that the whole mood exudes mirth and you think what a lively religion to make such a fine man. His thinking is logical and clear; his metaphysical terms are not confusing. The attitude is not that of a preacher, rather intelligent use of group psychology. Generally pleasant reading with not so much of a very theoretical rules to prescribe, but rather elucidation of the essentials of life related directly to the philosophy of India.

—*Bopton.*

Chapter Twenty-three

Sivananda and Cordelia Creveling

Raising a few imposing structures within the field of the philosophy of religion, some Western scholars, in the recent past, emphasised, constrained by the logic of their dryness and the needs of their conceptual consciousness, the element of the tremendous in, the awe-inspiring aspect of, the great Deity. . . .The Grace in Anne inclined to all that is delightful, bent on choosing and owning the beautiful, predisposed to gravitate herself close to the fascinating, takes a particular note of Sivananda's benevolent conception of God, of God as a wholly beneficent power, an embodiment of absolute bliss. . . . .Any advice that would make life easier and more meaningful, Anne would desire—such an advice, Anne says, Sivananda's sayings give. In this demand that Anne makes on literature, she packs a test for any literature of the world, a test for its validity, its worth, its very *raison d'etre.*

Anne abounds in generous impulses, 'betrays' in her little writing hereunder, the whole tone of her temper and the entire style of her life, that would not forgive nor stand any line even remotely harsh, discordant, and suggestive of

being arrayed against the forces that make for accord, and seems to be bent on enkindling in the very soul of wild Nature the calmness of which her own being is the source and centre. Had Anne a closer contact or personal correspondence with Sivananda, he would while heightening her devotion to the Divinity in Jesus the Christ, and aiding her manifest more radiantly the Graces which she carries latent in herself, christen her Annapurna, the sacred Name of the Deity at Banaras, the Great Goddess of all Grace and Goodness, distributing prosperity and sustaining powers to all that breathe, pouring into the very veins of gods Ichor, and accounting for Light wherever visible, for Knowledge wherever active, for Life wherever throbbing, for Grace wherever gently unveiled, Compassion wherever lavished, Service wherever rendered. Indirectly, Anne seems to say as much from the teaching of Sivananda as from her own inner impulsion, that we better call God by no other name save Love, Delight, pure Beneficence simple, utter, absolute Grace.

SWAMI Sivananda's pamphlet which I obtained carries a series of organised excerpts from Hindu scriptures, quite comparable to a book of meditations in the Christian tradition. Sivananda's quotations are on God and offer a benevolent

concept of God, emphasising the fascinating rather than the tremendous element. God is bliss, joy, a positive force.

Sivananda gives sayings for making life easier and more meaningful.

—*Anne.*

Almost in a conversational English, Cordelia Creveling articulates a few facts concerning the Forest Academy, the Ashram, the mission of the dissemination of spiritual knowledge and such other matters, and, finally, the cadence of Cordelia falls on the universality of Sivananda's message to mankind and its wide appeal....

SIVANANDA'S pamphlet interested me in that it helped me know what was going at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy. The various meetings, classes, celebrations were noted. It was also noted that the Ashram always had food and water; and that many people were actually dependent on it. For this reason, they needed any contributions that the readers could spare: rupees or food items. Sivananda is very free with his pamphlets and certainly wants to spread his ideas. He teaches Yoga and concentration as a path to realization and liberation. He does not seem to be terribly concerned with worldly matters. However, his ap-

proach was certainly universally aimed—and intended to include all peoples.

—*Cordelia Creveling.*

Chapter Twenty-four

Sivananda and Marylyn Martell

Wheeling its way in consummate delight, as any simple experience emergent from Enlightenment would find, estimate and express it, and as the Upanishads consistently affirm it, the world we live in, is yet felt, known and viewed by the man in ignorance, as whirling in the very vortex of all woe, weary, dreary, death-dealing, making for all mankind much misery, a history worse than the one Gibbon wrote, full of crimes, follies and misfortunes, a tragedy far more gruesome than any that would have been conceivable by the genius of the great poets in ancient Greece, a symbol of rascality greater than what Dickens would have felt drawn to depict, a vale of tears or a pit of live coals that a species of Buddhism is ever in a readiness of mood to preach. Marlyn Martell commands a mind made to measure Miltonic loftiness in thought, quick at the perception of sense and significance wherever concealed, and finds Sivananda interpret the world we live in, by the light of enlightenment he has obtained, by his exalted experience, by the divine eternity in which he moves and has his being, and his literature by surrounding her as much

with a breath of joy as with a sense of the fullness of the significance of life, trails a new conception of literature as the meaning of life bodied forth in really civilizing words, of literature as yielding a meaning to every phase of human experience, as bringing a light to the problems bound up with human affairs, as furnishing not only a direction to the feet of human progress, but also a delight to the human heart born of the arousal of its attention to the Godhead it bears, the numberless potentialities it carries, and as many resources within itself it can requisition for the joy of existence.

Great painters, poets, philosophers, prophets, are not men born to dream dreams, but men whose minds are less and less preoccupied with the superfices of the mundane world, and more and more occupied by, and absorbed in, the contemplation of the great realities which the veils of the world conceal from the view of the ordinary eye. . . .

THE small book of Sivananda which I read, contained short stories, or what might be called parables, for helping one in the ways and problems of life. They were told in a simple and clever manner, so that the average man might understand them. He

spoke of everyday experiences, yet gave each with a Mantra or lesson at the end of them. He would have people ask questions to one another concerning the Great Being, or on how one comes to the realization of that Great Being. He states that Brahman is, and man, through effort, must realise it.

In a great literature, the greatness of values embodied, is a reflection of the greatness of the Soul its author enshrines in himself—and, the power it transmits, is the power with which is wrought his whole life....

Sivananda is an active person—one who has reached the state of "realization", yet he did not go into a state of passivity because of that realization. He is active and enjoys the fullness of life. This can be seen in his philosophy, for he touches on every phase of life in his teaching, so that man might understand integral life. I learned from his booklet that men all over the world are concerned basically with the same problem—the attempt to realize the importance and meaning of life through the actual awareness of what one essentially "is". His parables would be enjoyed by men throughout the world, because they touch on everyday affairs, and yet they

bring a significance to them, a meaning for their experiences.

—*Marylyn Martell.*

When a philosopher is doubled by a Yogi, a Mystic, as in Sivananda, we have one whose every word is spoken or written from, in, and for, an intoxicating experience of God.

THIS issue of the journal of the Yoga-Vedanta Foerst Academy, was an accumulation of the short sayings and inspirational messages of Swami Sivananda. The one notable saying by the philosopher that Sivananda is, was made in answer to a statement by a gentleman who had just taken on a high public office. He had said that he entered this public life, and the only comment of Sivananda the philosopher was, "enter divine service." This message is prevalent in the style and choice of words throughout the issue of the Yoga-Vedanta Weekly journal he runs.

—*George D. Ferry.*

Incarnate in the Literature of Sivananda, is the power to aid man in his urge towards Knowledge; and here it may be noted that nowhere in the whole of the contemporary Western psychology

which treats, in its specialised branches and fields, only of the urge in man for power, for self-expression, for self-reproduction, for self-preservation, do we find even a remote hint at the possibility of man being overmastered by an urge for Knowledge with which the Sivananda Literature is concerned....

WRITTEN in a simple and direct language, the little booklet of Swami Sivananda contained many types of instruction and advice for living the good life as well as several parables and stories to illustrate different aspects of life. One of the main points of his message, was to urge one to knowledge, for this is an essential part of the evolution of man toward a supra-mental state. This evolution of man and the simultaneous involution of the supreme Being shows the end to which we are heading and for which we should persevere.

—*L. Keville Larson.*

SIVANANDA is a man of amazing intellect and power. His amazing outpouring of books and literature and his works are exemplary of his philosophy. He is one who, having attained insight and the realization, is not content to remain in constant

meditation but pours his intellect into numerous works and undertakings. What he does (which is considerable) he does with great intensity and full devotion.

The little pamphlet was particularly interesting in that its content, it would seem, is simply a collection of little anecdotes or reflections of small events of each day. He sees importance in every action and circumstance. One could find the Being in everything in the world and in all of existence. He would not value the existence of perpetual meditation and doing nothing for one's fellowmen. He helps all he can in as many ways as he can.

—*Rogene Godding.*

Sivananda's portraiture of the nature of the Atmic-realization conveys a high impressiveness, and imparts a wondrous feeling, to John Gillis. Progress by ordeal is the progress on the path of spirituality, and no ordeal is too great, for the rewards that are added to us as a result of successful treading of the path, are beyond all measuring and priceless.

SIVANANDA'S pamphlet was most impressive in its praise of the state of the

realization of the Atman, and of the wondrous feelings of that state. The path of Yoga for the realization that the Atman and the Brahman are one, is a very difficult path involving much self-discipline, and Sivananda recognises this, but the state of Samadhi attained, is certainly worth the effort, by his own testimony.

Sivananda points out the necessity of a Guru or Teacher, in striving for fulfilment, because the Atman cannot be attained by oneself alone, unaided. Sivananda does an excellent job of giving meaning to the stage of Yoga, by explaining the purpose of each in the path to Samadhi. Each stage of Yoga, is seen to have a value in disciplining the individual for further advance toward the final stage.

John Gillis draws our attention to Sivananda's faith in, and encouragement of, each man at attaining Samadhi, and it seems, and which John Gillis could not see, this has its corollary in each man reposing, instinctively, in tern, his faith in the gifts Sivananda commands for leading all towards that far-off Goal, which is yet, paradoxically, here and now.

Sivananda's message of inspiration is

embodied in his praise of God and His glories, and in his faith in, and encouragement of, each man at attaining Samadhi, the ultimate realization. He describes the way, Yoga, and the result, Samadhi, in a lucid and inspiring manner. His own fascination with the Divine, apparent throughout the pamphlet, stirs the reader to investigate this Being of the Great Reality.

—*John Gillis.*

Chapter Twenty-five

Sivananda and James Wilson

That Sivananda is a super-social individual, who, notwithstanding his detachment from the world, and his firm status in the Beyond, incessantly labours, on a grand scale, for the spiritual ascension of the human society as a whole, constitutes the cardinal note of the report on Sivananda Literature made by James Reed, and there stands Bill advancing an interesting counter-thesis, in defence of Sivananda, on those that hold the view that realization is something by which the individual loses himself in the great Nihil, and at the least, that such an individual is useless to human society, spinning away the precious moments of his life in idle dreaming in the name of meditation. Direct from the energies released by his integral realization of the Divine, Sivananda derives his illimitable enthusiasm and ardour for pouring into print, in such profusion, his words of profound wisdom which in their own right form one of the many striking proofs of the vast energies he commands and exerts constantly in the service of humanity at large, and his many-sided impetus and urge to recreate Man from within, in the image of Truth, Light,

Power, Wisdom, selfless Service, aesthetic Norms formed by the Delight and Consciousness of that Existence which expends and unrolls itself in the experience and expression of the Divine in daily living. Consummate spiritual realization did not annul his personality but reconstituted it in terms of the attributes of the Divine, and made it a pure and unsullied channel for the unceasing flow of his services in Knowledge, in the joy and unfoldment of the Self in existence, in the spread of illumination to the mind, and delight to the heart, of humanity.

According to James Reed Sivananda's message to men of all creeds, may be summed up as centering round "a simple, honest, straightforward love of God," and his message to the world in general as bound up with peace, love, and unity with God.

IN the *Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy* booklet, Sivananda devoted himself to making four hundred statements or pearls of wisdom which he had written through the years. Some were short and practical, others long and of a highly philosophical nature. In any case, here is a man dedicated to what he believes to be the right way, the way of God. This man though

engaged in the work of the Vedanta Forest Academy, Ayurvedic Pharmacy, Publication League, teaching and writing, can still take time to meditate on the cheerful goodness of seeking Brahman, i.e., God. He does not invoke people to follow great ritualistic procedures to find God. His message of the simple, honest, straightforward love of God is a message for all men of all creeds.

The Swami's four hundred pearls of wisdom answer in a simple manner, and concisely, questions both to our spiritual and everyday life. He seems to say in a few short words, things which are very difficult to grasp in our daily lives. Simple statements like "the man who says little, is the man who knows much", is an example of the concise expression of wisdom, of this writer. "All is Brahman", is another simple expression. This man is a man who is beyond society; he has achieved Samadhi but chooses to aid his fellow-men disseminate truth and dispense charity to everyone who will listen or hear. Self-sacrificing that he is, he gives his message of peace, love, and unity with God, to the world.

—*James Reed.*

James Wilson has in Sivananda a beacon almost of the message, "The Divine is sought most efficiently and truly from within"....

SIVANANDA'S message impressed itself upon me as one of compassion, tolerance and diligence. I have changed my thoughts as to the meaning of religion not only as a result of the impact of his own ideas, but also of the Eastern philosophy and world-view. I have learned that religion or worthwhile religious insight, is a personal affair. This idea is incompatible with the social organization of religion in the West. Sivananda represents to me, as an instance of all that can be achieved as a result of devoted effort and optimistic views. He is a beacon almost of the message, "The Divine is sought most efficiently and truly from within."

—*James R. Wilson.*

When writings are transcriptions of the states of a Mind held aloft by transcendental vision and experience, a Mind permanently poised over the principles that preside over the very formation and dissolution of the phenomena of all life,

they are ensured of eternity in the duration of their existence, bear truths that are true in all circumstances, in all ages, in all cultures, in all civilizations, applicable as much to the Stanford scholar as to the peasant on the Indian farm.

AFTER having reached the eighth stage of Yoga, the Yogi is now unified with the Atman. Sivananda belongs to that type of Yogis who after Brahmic-realization seek to help humanity attain spiritual realization. Sivananda spends his vast energies on a number of activities calculated to bring peace, happiness and enlightenment to mankind. Sivananda says that the striving for the Atman is indeed rewarded by the inexpressible feeling of calm and joy which most overcomes us. In addition we are imbued with a sort of superhuman strength which enables us to accomplish many valuable works. This spirit also seems to direct our actions toward an ultimate goal. We also make it possible in various ways, for other people to reach the Atman. —*Mary.*

Determined by the dominating trends of dynamis in the powerful personality formed around him, the Person in the fullness of spiritual Enlightenment, performs such deeds and

accomplishes such works as would sustain,
for an age, the Powers of Wisdom and of Good
in their challenging function in a war-monger-
ing world of human ignorance and misdeeds.

AFTER he gained Samadhi, Sivananda who is a Karma Yogi, did not remain silent, and in meditation or concentration, but continued to work, and work harder. All Yogis, therefore, do not, from the standpoint of helping others and improving their Karma, become worthless. Sivananda publishes several magazines or pamphlets in addition to his work for his world-wide organization.

—*Bill.*

Chapter Twenty-six

Sivananda and Edwin Taylor

The Indian spirit that looked askance at, and despised the greatness of Alexander the Great, who had his temper formally tutored by one no less than the Greek philosopher Aristotle, and extended his heroic deeds, his invincibility, his conquests over the vast territories of the politically much troubled good earth, has not, with the lapse of twenty-four centuries, grown old, but has retained, and what is more, added to its, youthhood, a fresh vigour in Sivananda, only to assert, for the 'umptieth' time, with unusual vitality, its message, "I am the King of kings, the Emperor of emperors, deathless, exceeding in pomp of the play of my Consciousness-Light, the infinitised pomp of the Northern lights, the Eastern dawns, the Western coronations, ranging my Will over the domains that know no darkness, that keep away the very deeds of Time, and wind up in one of their petty corners, the vast spaces within the brain of man and outside in the stellar reaches...." The message of the utmost value to the human mind and life, and of eternal urgency to human situation and need, that India promulgates, as much through the Sages of the

Upanishadic age as through the Sage of our own times, Sivananda, is of the Advaita Vedantic thought, the oneness of all being, the absoluteness of the dignity of man, of man as aroused in Consciousness to the fact of the underlying Reality in all life, of the contemplation upon, and a growth of oneself into, the Truth that never perishes, the Infinite Beauty that always is, the Absolute in being, in knowledge, in awareness, that is forever the centre, the background, the goal, the aim of man's feeble existence on earth.

'Plato located the soul of man in the head; Christ located it in the heart', said Saint Jerome—and, the Vedanta illustrated in the life, and enunciated in the writings, of Sivananda locates it here, there, everywhere and knows it in experience as the eternally Self-revealed, Self-realised, the awareness of awareness, the Consciousness of all consciousness, the Being of all beings, the Light that sees in the darkness, that sees even in the blazing and blindening light, that is awake when man is asleep, and most inwardly aware when man is most self-conscious, conscious of his own consciousness....

By the grandeur of his personality, by the lucidity of his expression, and the extraordinary richness

of the material he presents, and as a rightful heir to the whole of Indian philosophic and spiritual traditions and treasures,—to have helped the Western world in general, and, in this context, the Students of Stanford University in particular, master all the rudiments of Indian thought, and gain many penetrating perceptions into the Indian Mind, Heart, and Soul—this is yet another aspect of the contribution Sivananda, through his literature, makes to the growth, primarily of fundamental Knowledge in the West, and secondarily, of the knowledge in the West, concerning the East.

SIVANANDA expresses the belief that God or Brahman is everywhere, and man must trust in Him for obtaining the exalted Atman. If man desires to achieve the Aman, he must practise Yoga which will discipline him mentally, physically and spiritually. Only by excluding from his experience the sensual world, can man achieve the Atman or the realization of the Self.

Edwin Taylor takes up for his subject-matter Sivananda's depiction of the Yogic Way to Enlightenment.

Sivananda sees the Atman as end of the endless cycle of the Samsara. Man is

led outside the wheel of Samsara by practising Yoga, by forgetting the illusory world about him, and realizing Brahman. Atman can be realised by concentrating on the nature of the real Self. As one practises deeper meditation and concentration, one's Self will become slowly, but surely, revealed to one. Sivananda recommends that man must concentrate on Yoga practices. for finding the true Self and Enlightenment.

—*Edwin J. Taylor.*

Faith Juade finds in that section of Sivananda Literature that gave itself for her study, much that is entrancing to the human soul, and enough of that which can arouse human curiosity.

RIGHT from the first sentence of these "Parables of Sivananda", we get completely entranced until we find the solution or the moral, and they are especially interesting, because they bear a direct relation to our everyday actions in life. Thus a true characteristic of how one lives—but just a slightly deeper insight—was gained. Also, the long and detailed list of the programme of the daily life of a Yoga practitioner was amazing. The great specific

details, the long hours before breakfast, and early rising, and what one eats and how one clears the mind of all thoughts, for the acquisition of a quiescent state of mind—these held my interest.

The Sivananda pamphlet showed how directly and how well aware Sivananda was concerned with all and the intimate details and habits of his people, so through parables of an "earthly, homely" character, he can really and very effectively get his inspirational message across. The pamphlet aroused my curiosity—even as I finished the reading of one parable, I was drawn to read the next.

—*Faith Juade.*

The persisting power, the irresistible liveliness and the supreme value of a culture lies in the loftiness to which it lifts human life from the meanness that we associate with the man who lives merely for lucre, pursues sensate pleasures, panders to his animal passions,....consists in the high ideas which it holds out for reflection, the great conceptions it formulates as a light for life, the rich experience it embodies as principles of action....America is fast assuming cultural importance, distinguishing itself as the custodian of the Western

culture that arose in Greece and Rome....It is significant that the cultured Americans in general, and the Stanford scholars in particular, study the Literature of Sivananda which is atonce the heart and the mouthpiece of the greatess ensouled by the Indian culture.

SWAMI Sivananda of Forest Academy gives to his many followers the inspiring message of a man who is actively participating in the state of Samadhi. Sivananda's writings indicate to all, the lines of action for a realization of the true goal of their lives, and of their union with the Divine or the Brahman. Why do we spend our time catering to the demands of the ego, with its manifestations in such temporal hindrances as illness and the greedy struggle for material wealth? To Sivananda, it is important that we have faith and a strong belief in the "Being of Beings."

—*Donna Stearus.*

Chapter Twenty-seven

Sivananda & Catherine Campbell

Contrary to the peevish tendency in the prejudiced traditional Western view of the East, which sticks to the coat of the Oriental genius the infamous label of an incapacity for practical attainments, and compliments it by an irrational and impatient denunciation of the philosophical East as a vast dreamland where men spin away their lives into specious speculations, Sivananda, whose dynamic achievements, amazing vitality, world-wide activity and diverse accomplishments, have evoked an encomiastic comment almost from every alternative person among the Stanford scholars that have reported on his literature, has always taken to the West a view which had generously affirmed, and developed the idea of, and nowhere betrayed the display of a mood to deny, a comparatively deep spirituality to the occidental spirit, a fact all the more pronounced in his treatment of the spiritual experiences of the great mystics within the fold of the Christian faith.

A certain identity of doctrine and principles of discipline between the Indian religion and

Christianity, the Sivananda Literature aids the Stanford University students discern and acknowledge—The fact is, as an exercise of thought a little further would not fail to show, so all-embracing are the leading ideas in the religion of India that any and all the essentials and the fundamentals of all other religions can either be read into, or be traced from, it,

My Sivananda booklet consisted of a series of questions and answers and then of a group of short passages on things such as morality. Of particular interest to me, were two of the questions and answers. One was on the use of forceful control. He was against it, and said natural means should be used. The other was that we should obey our parents, and he said we should be able to choose, but when we are small, we should obey them because they are older and wiser and they seek only after our own best interests. I was surprised to find his inspirational message was not too far different from Christianity, although, of course, not the same thing. He seemed just mystical and yet he stressed the importance of helping others. This can be traced in the fact he has reached En-

lightenment, and instead of sitting around meditating as others do, he works very hard, disseminating spiritual knowledge.

—*Peggy Christman.*

The rights of an eminent author to immortality rest upon the number of great ideas he breathes out, the ideas which by their very greatness cannot but assume an extreme relevance to every situation of life, become messages pressing themselves upon all men with the force of an urgency, and lit up and transform into a bright answer every problem that vexes Man in any stage of his life, in any event of his experience, and in any race or clime, age or culture, of the world.

SIVANANDA'S booklet gave us the picture of a man who has attained liberation by the denial of ego. He is completely unselfish. Working for others, for the poor, he has forgotten about his own needs. His joy—he is ever 'smiling', 'speaking sweetly'—is an incentive for others to achieve what he has achieved. The ethics he preaches are much like Christian ethics: truth, purity, selflessness. He cares not

for the particular faith of a person, but he encourages people never to lose sight of the ultimate reality. His message is laid in the ethics he preaches, and in the example he sets of selflessness, the giving of alms, hard work.

—*Catherine L. Campbell.*

Chapter Twenty-eight

Sivananda and Robert Fleming

The assumption that the East is inferior to the West in everything relating to practical life, lacks the support of evidence and can be shown to have been successfully disproved and overthrown by the data the scholars in Oriental thought have gathered, and by the attention of the critics they have drawn to the factors of distinction the East obtained in matters pertaining to administration, legal technicalities, constitutional laws, social organisation, public-spirited activities, aesthetic principles, arts and crafts. Apart from this subdued, dignified and distinguishing practicality of the East on the material plane, which can be easy of denial only when we concentrate on comparing it to the excessive and self-defeating practicality of the West, there comes for a dispassionate consideration the other intensive Eastern practicality, incomparably more intensive than any that can be shown at any period in the religious history of the West, consisting in the numberless techniques it has perfected for the evolution of the human consciousness into its ultimate spiritual awareness—the experiments it has made

in the world of highest Ideas and Ideals far transcending any that engaged the attention of the best minds in the fullest flowering of the Grecian culture, the triumphant experiments it has carried on, on the vital breath in relation to man's psychological self-mastery and self-transcendence, the successful experiments it has made with the physical postures, in order man may be best aided to obtain the supreme Goal of life, by establishing a perfect rule over his own physiological, nueral, and mental nature, the valuable experiments it has conducted in its study of the effects the constituents of food exert upon the human system and human psychology, and in their light the dietetic regulations it has prescribed, the varied formulæ and practice it has laid down by way of the Tantras, the Yantras, the Mantras, and the many types of Yoga.

SWAMI Sivananda's *Yoga in Daily Life*, is addressed to the aspirants who are still seeking the "Divine Wisdom". Each of us is, in his own way, a seeker of happiness, but the confused and miguided man, according to Sivananda, is the one who believes that lasting happiness can be found in material objects. The possibilities of

eternal bliss can only be found in the Atma, in the true Self-realization within the heart. When the Atman is united with the Brahman, or the Eternal Spirit, the person has reached the point of obtaining "Divine Wisdom". The results of this successful unity are: (a) the person finds lasting peace or bliss; (b) he has escaped Samsara. In daily life, Yoga is prescribed in the interests of Self-realization. Since his ego-centricity veils his Atman, man must ceaselessly strive to break this little ego. A man must give up the idea of "I-ness" and "mine-ness". Instead he must look within for the happiness which he has sought in vain, in sensual objects. Yoga is essential in this process. Sivananda stresses the importance of a Guru in obtaining the desired Self-realization. For underneath the name and form of the Guru, there is the all-pervading 'pure consciousness'. Time permits the physical form to vanish and the realization of your own Self, the pure Brahmic Consciousness, that lies at the back of the physical form of your Guru.

The goal in life is Self-realization. The two ways for attaining God-consciousness are: 1) Yoga and 2) *Pravritti Marga*, or

the path of activity with detachment, for attaining the cosmic vision, in and through the diverse experiences of normal life. There are four kinds of Yoga corresponding to the four kinds of human temperament. In the chapter that follows, Sivananda gives an account of the practices of the four Yogas. Bhakti is intense devotion towards God. The qualifications for the attainment of Bhakti are: a pure loving heart, faith, innocence, simplicity and truthfulness. The love you have toward all worldly objects should be combined and given to God. This, to me, implies a simple matter of transfer of feelings. The past attachment to worldly objects, is gradually eliminated in this manner.

In Karma Yoga the emphasis is on action and work. Designed for people of active temperament, Karma Yoga stresses whole-hearted service. Work becomes a means of worship, instead of a means of satisfying the ego. Again, the ego dissolves through another method of transfer of emphasis. Sivananda points out that motives must always be scrutinized. Every act can be spiritualised, when the motive becomes pure.

Raja Yoga is for men of mystical temperament. The mind is analysed first in terms of will, ego, reason, spiritual mind, etc. The development of the will-power by auto-suggestion, is the basic principle of Raja Yoga. The objective is to clear the mind of ego-centricity shadowing the Atman. Through various stages the Raja Yogi clears his mind, by transferring his thinking towards more spiritual goals. In this instance, by the control of mind, he obtains divine wisdom.

As we see, King's is a bird's-eye-view of the different types of Yoga evolved by the eternal spiritual progression of the soul of India, to suit the difference in human temperament, and to provide adequate, technical and perfect aid for spiritual exercise and development to every preference in human endowment, to the demand of every attained status in the self-unfolding consciousness.

Jnana Yoga is for people of intellectual temperament with bold understanding and strong will-power. As in Raja Yoga, the person is encouraged to meditate on the true Self, assert the real 'I', by realising how shallow and false the little self

is. Meditation on abstract subjects is encouraged.

It was interesting to read in this section, Sivananda's explanation of Good and Evil in the world. According to him, there is no independent existence between the two. Because good and evil are mental creations, there can be no absolute standard of good and evil in this relative world. The only absolute good is to be found in Brahman alone.

Hatha Yoga stresses special physical exercises. According to Sivananda, it is a battling with the opposing forces in the material and spiritual fields. Not only is the practice of the physical postures supposed to bring about Self-realization eventually, but also they remove undesirable diseases from the system. In long periods of maintaining a certain posture, the mind becomes free for concentrating on spiritual and abstract subjects. Here again the aim is the destruction of the ego.

—*King.*

What else can account for the sort of a popular Divinity that Sivananda is with most people, but the unnumbered acts of kindness, a daily procession of most benevolent works, plain acts

of genuine spiritual love, a few words of wisdom scattered?—They are indeed the minute points on which the magnificent results of his gigantic spiritual activity revolve. By endless feats of kindness and generosity, by feats of service and succour, and never by high asceticism nor by the thaumaturgy nor by the well-guarded solitary loneliness of a Self-enlightened Being, nor yet by the repeated exhibition of 'miracles', that Sivananda has won almost all the earth as a province for his spiritual eminence. "Be good and do good"—is the keynote of his teaching, a teaching which is more than the first principle in elementary ethics: moral in import, it is spiritual in content, significance, aim and results; and the life of Sivananda is itself the one delightfully long-continued commentary on this maxim of simple greatness. Added to this dimension of simple greatness, the personality of Sivananda projects the transcendental spiritual greatness formed of his highest personal Divine Realization, to touch which has been, in a way, the purport of the report on Sivananda Literature, made by Robert Fleming.

SIVANANDA finds in his own experience, the immanence of the Divine which is universal and one, and he strongly stresses the importance of Yoga as a means of attaining personal realization of the Divine.

His philosophical outlook may be termed Vedanta which is monistic. He himself has apparently reached the highest level of Yoga, particularly of Raja Yoga. He emphasises work and action along with meditation and other spiritual pursuits.

A short biographical sketch stated that he had practised medicine for a decade, after which he accepted the call to be a spiritual Teacher and leader. He is the dynamic founder and leader of Vedantic thought movement in its modern forms, and of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy in Rishikesh, from where he publishes voluminously, books, booklets, pamphlets, journals, and other publications. He is considered by many of his world-wide followers, to be a living saint—a true Jivanmukta, the living liberated Man.

—*Robert Fleming.*

Chapter Twenty-nine

Sivananda and Ruth Kirkman

Much sense is not made, nor any real good done, nor yet any act of a Creative Intelligence shown, by the application of attention, and discriminative thought, to the distinguishing facts of the essential East, and exalting the East over the West, the East as the mother of all great religions, the West as the hot-bed of all great revolutions and greater wars, the East as predominantly spiritual and absorbed. by its very instincts, in the transcendental and the infinite, the West as rabidly atheistic in attitude and crassly materialistic in its proclivities and tendencies, the East as abiding by the duties of man, the West as clamouring for the rights of man. the East as devoted to the culture of the Spirit and the West as lost to the Soul, and lost in the conquest of the outer Nature, the East as panting after God, the West as prizing and pursing gold, and the rest of such nonsense.

With men like Janet and Cousin of France, Buckle, Henry Maine and Flint of England.... the history of the distinction between the East and the West is in a way related, and this

distinction which was in its initial stages merely a dogma of the social science, ended up in the politically inspired and the most mischievous rhyme-scheme of Rudyard Kipling, by assuming in the passions, affections and imagination of men a fresh significance, a pointedness that turned into something of a reality that which always is purely mythical.

A certain religious rapproachment of East and West is the insistent underlying aim of the literature of Sivananda—but it is not to this trend in this literature, but to the obvious fact made more obvious by the writings of Sivananda, that many among the essentials of religions share an identity, at least in form, that we have to set down the case the Stanford University scholars make out from their studies in Sivananda literature, the case of an identity between some of the central doctrines and principles of discipline of the Indian religion and Christianity.

SIVANANDA'S pamphlet was very inspiring to me, a Christian, despite its Hindu origin. I learned that the Hindu doctrines, or its basic beliefs, are not so very different from my own. His inspirational mes-

sage of the good life to be led, for reaching Nirvana, or for realising the Self, the importance of Yoga for attaining this realization, and above all, his complete devotion to religious beliefs and strivings, would inspire any reader who had a sense of the spiritual at all.

Such, then, is the spirit of the twentieth century, that any literature that furnishes, by a presentment of the 'philosophia perennis', and by an isolation and special treatment of the eternal values embodied in the various religious traditions of the world, a firm foundation for the unity of all religions, is bound to acquire a very high importance and value, specially so when that literature is the expression of the earnestness of a universal Man, to restore to humanity its fundamental vision and its rightful claims to the modes of an exalted Life, the product of a cosmic man, the man who belongs to all humanity by virtue of his boundless love for all mankind, his numberless services and sacrifices for human welfare, by the deeds of his Compassion and his gifts, the one like Sivananda.

I could see many of my own thoughts put into words; the seeking for realization of a higher Self, which is Sivananda's whole reason for living. His entire life,

or that of anyone who follows the messages in the pamphlet, is truly a dedicated one. At first glance, it may seem to be centred only on the individual, with no concern for others, but as I read I saw that if each person really believes these messages, his actions will necessarily help others around him. I understand the Hindu use of Yoga to attain this Self because I can see that the Christian devotion to a life of doing good is merely another (their own) way of gaining their salvation. No matter what the reasons, the end is the same. The messages given by Sivananda in the pamphlet may inspire any religious person seeking this end of salvation through Enlightenment.

The pamphlet of Sivananda gave a good indication of the frequent employment of the concept of Bhakti in Hindu thought. It indicates the realization of the Divine in all aspects of life. Sivananda speaks of the necessary relationships between man and man, man and world, and man and God, and indicates the ways for obtaining Enlightenment and the Realization of the Being of Beings. His views on these relationships are quite different from the original Hinduism and from its concepts of any involvements and realizations.

Of a score and more of the prominent features of the wide-ranging subjects of the Sivananda Literature, Sivananda's neo-Hinduism and Sivananda's Sadhana for the realization of the Divine in every phase of everyday living, obtained above a special mention from Molly.

One further thing of interest is Sivananda's prodigious activity and prolific writings. It is a delightful idea to express oneself to the rest of mankind and refuse to believe in inactivity or isolation.

—*Molly.*

Our time-spirit is extremely favourable for a fusion of all superficial differences, a closer binding of all mankind by fundamentals, an enthusiastic appreciation of the identity of noble aspirations in the soul of Anne of America and the soul of Annapurna of India, an abidance by a spirit that finds all the world a single house, and all men the inmates of that single house....a thing, all the more easy of achievement when we have at the helm of this scheme such a one as Sivananda who, while he is highly esteemed by the learned elite, for his prolific writings, is loved equally by the Christians, the Parsis, the Muslims, the Hindus, the

Buddhists, and is all things to all men, and plays many roles for beneficent service.

INTERESTING as the pamphlet of Sivananda was, it tried to get at the basic meaning of existence and of the nature of God. It seems to me that the best way to communicate an abstract idea is to illustrate it in as many ways as possible, which is what Sivananda does. In this way, at least one of the illustrations would be very meaningful, to most of the people. Sivananda's pamphlet makes a peaceful reading. It gives the impression of a peaceful, gentle, God who is everywhere and in all things. To understand it, or to get much of its potential meaning and significance, it should be read many times, and considered a great deal.

—*Ruth Kirkman.*

Chapter Thirty

Sivananda and George Gray

To take up a human face here and lit it up with a smile and a cheer, to touch a broken human heart there and weld it into a stout joy, to read into the human mind vexed by many problems, a riddle-resolving message, to visit human life and draw therefrom the significance and the prospects of endless joy it holds in itself, and of which it is so ignorant and so doubtful, in short, to spread happiness in the widest commonality, on a universal scale, over every grade and stratum of human society—these are the tasks with which the Literature of Sivananda is bound up, tasks quite unique because generally unshared by the other categories of world's literature, and because they are just the tasks which every type of human heart, a sorrowing human heart, a happy human heart turned toward the pursuit of Beauty, an aspiring human heart resolutely striving after Truth, a heroic human heart intent on unravelling the threads of life and pursuing every thought to its final unfoldment, a great human heart unwilling to seek a compromise with human limitations and

unyielding in its will to know God, see the face of the Divine here on earth, in this life, would have any literature execute. This we say in a reflective acknowledgement of the simple assertion of Mary Guffing that Sivananda's works have brought happiness to thousands of people all over the world.

Against the view that dies hard in the West, of India as negating all life and all that is of value in this world, is the bold corrective of George Gray embodying the extreme optimism of the Indian thought coursing through the written works of Sivananda.

THOUGH designed primarily for those that have faith, the Sivananda-pamphlet does, of course, provide non-believers particularly, an insight as to how the believers are inspired by such pamphlets, and what the nature of their belief is. The point that struck me most in the pamphlet was the extreme optimism of Sivananda. Sivananda's philosophy and religion, though it is as other-worldly as any other-worldly religion can be, puts a great amount of faith in human nature. This world is of course regarded as unimportant; the next is the only thing that counts. However,

the value of this world is not completely negatived. Sivananda's ethics is concerned with proper conduct in this world. Though mystical his religion trusts in the goodness of man, and hence is very optimistic. This characteristic is perhaps very common among the Eastern religions, however much they negate the value of life in this world.

Among the many abilities of man, analysed and categorised by psychology and other disciplines of human thought, the one that gets neither widely known nor as frequently stated, is the most fundamental ability, the capacity that man alone enjoys over the rest of the Creation, the capacitance for self-transcendence, for world-transcendence, for raising his Will into a force of universal beneficence, for turning his little love into an all-embracing and universal Love, for standing on his own shoulders and gazing into the deeps beyond in his Consciousness, his Awareness, his inner Self, for a realization of the Divine Being in daily life.

Sivananda asserts that the most important thing is the ability of man here on earth to communicate with the other world. That man can transcend life and delve into the ultimate Reality, through

certain acts, is perhaps the core of Sivananda's religion. People who do have this mystical experience and insight such as he and his followers cannot help but act rightly in relation to their fellow-men. Hence, proper actions should be done by all, and the world, though, transcendentally viewed, unimportant, is relatively important and imposes on one the duty of doing good.

—*George W. Gray.*

An invulnerable point of fact made out by Mary Guffing is that even the mere presence of Sivananda forms a powerful phenomenon impregnating the general human experience with a sense of the Divine Influence.

Reading between the lines here below, we feel the very soul of Mary Guffing, and find it strongly inclined to turn an advocate of the Forces of Goodness, a champion of the Cause of the Life Divine, the world's best blue-bird, and an eloquent exponent of the saving wisdom granted to all mankind by those rare ones who tread and toil on earth only to sink into the deeps of the heart of humanity, as the richest

sources of succour and peace to men in their moments of trouble and need, as the strongest supports to the feeble reed of human life in general, as the only resources that supply visibility to human eyes when nothing within the realms of mere human knowledge and wisdom aids them see their way forward.

SWAMI Sivananda has established an Ashram, near the Ganges, in the Himalayas, and also a Forest Academy. This Karma Yogi was a physician, but he renounced that profession. Now, he gives all his time to writing books and pamphlets, running the Academy, corresponding with people, visiting others, and talking with those who come to visit him. He gets up early every morning and meditates and bathes in the Ganges, and then works every minute of the day; he has brought happiness to thousands of people all over the world who have heard his message, or read his works.

Though the orb of modernity helps Sivananda represent himself as a happy blend of the East and the West, his whole being deep-laid in the fullness of spiritual Enlightenment raises him to the altitudes of the towering Sage of

the Himalayas he always is, and compels Mary Guffing designate him 'the dynamic Indian doing an amazing amount of work, and devoting all his life and energies to helping people all over the world reach the heights of Enlightenment that are his.'

Swami Sivananda is a blending of the East and the West, and brings peace and happiness to people in these times of tension, turmoil and uncertainty. He has reached Enlightenment himself, but has been devoting all his life and energies to helping others reach it. This dynamic Indian does an amazing amount of work—he runs a number of institutions and undertakes varied activity. His message is that there is hope for every man through good action and meditation. One can reach Enlightenment through these practices.' Sivananda's very presence is a powerful thing, and affects people with the Divine Influence.

—*Mary Guffing.*

In and through Sivananda literature, a greater understanding of Contemporaray Hinduism is rendered possible for Ann Kent.

THE Sivananda pamphlet emphasized the numerous attributes and qualities of

Love. Selections from Sivananda's writings were presented in the first part of the pamphlet, each selection describing love in a different way. Man's need for love formed the inspirational message of the pamphlet. From the pamphlet a picture is formed of a highly venerated and beloved teacher; a man of vast energy, caring for the spiritual needs of his followers, answering their questions and providing inspiration. It is the picture of an enlightened man who devotes himself to the needs of others. The pamphlet gives a greater understanding of the Hindu religion of today, as it is manifested in the works of Sivananda.

—*Ann Kent.*

His own highest attainments in spirituality, yield Sivananda deepest insights into human psychology, self-renewing divine energies for endless work for the well-being and spiritual evolution of the human race, and a never-ending flow of Knowledge illuminating every nook and corner, cranny and crevice of the problem of human life. With many other scholars, Marjorie Beyer has in Sivananda a particularly interesting person, for reasons implicitly listed hereunder.

SIVANANDA is specially interesting; he is powerful and an expert in his under-

standing of people. He apparently has the ability to "see" into people, to know what they need in religion, in bodily well-being, in psychology, and in counselling. After recognising peoples differing needs, Sivananda adjusts his help accordingly. When a poor beggar came to him, asking for aid for a terrible itching all over his body, Sivananda seeing that the man could not afford medical treatment, but, however was not in need of a hospital, prescribed the use of Ganges' mud. The man's faith in the curative and restorative effects of the Ganges' mud—and also perhaps the cool *mud* itself—cured the man's itching completely.

When students from a high school came to visit Sivananda, he sat down with them, and led them in singing holy songs. He said, "Honour and respect your father, mother. Obey your teacher. Be righteous. Repeat *Ram Nam*", and then he gave them a short sermon for their guidance. Besides leading a just, obedient, pious life, they should constantly remind themselves of the ways of Ram, by repeating His Name, and should utter the sacred syllable *Om* over and over, mentally at all times.

—*Marjorie Beyer*

Chapter Thirty-one

Sivananda and Joy Dristine

The inherent limitations of the scientific instrumentation and the intellectual activity, the constitutional incapacity, the inevitable inability, of logic to approach, or even make possible an apprehension of, Truth the methods and schools of philosophy in the East and in the West, the elements of ascendence in the nature of Yogic knowledge and Yogic development, the salient features of the Wisdom of Rishis of India possess and live in and from—these theses, themes and subjejcts share among themselves, and exhaust all the printed pages of Sivananda's *Essays in Philosophy,* the work that is critically studied and ably reported on by Joy Dristine.

Such then is the quality of the Mind owned and shown in action by Joy Dristine that it puts up a promise, and bears a prospect, of establishing for him a well-deserved reputation for being an individual of an intellectual calibre of altogether a higher cadre.

Joy Dristine seems to see in Sivananda the envisagement of a scheme of Self-realization for

those Minds that are brought up in a scientific environment and used to the scientific method.... A splendid task, anyway—presupposing on the part of the planning Mind a rootedness in the realization of the Self, and an enjoying of the added advantage of a richness of intellectual endowment.

SWAMI Sivananda writes his book, *Essays in Philosophy*, from a definite understanding of Western philosophical thought. From his introductory discussion of the three main philosophic methods, rationalism, empiricism, and mysticism, to his closing summaries of the lives of various Western philosophers, he is considering the understanding and possibilities of Self-realization for those who are used to the scientific method in reaching conclusions.

As he proceeds further, Joy Dristine is granted the delight of a discovery of the boundaries beyond which science cannot go, and to cross which reason has no resource, thus leaving Man fall back upon whatever power of apprehension, whatever faculty of a thorough-going investigation of the very 'why', the intrinsic 'why', of all phenomenal manifestation, and whatever means of complete knowing that lie behind reason and

science, that lie latent in the consciousness of man, that need the disciplines of Gnosis, and the services of the practices of higher Yoga, for a development of their powers into dynamic and full action.

Sri Sivananda first defines the various Western schools and branches of philosophy. He then compares philosophy, science, and religion in his second chapter, and it is here that I found his points most interesting. He says, "The scientist tries to answer the 'how' of the problem: the philosopher and the Yogi the 'why' of it". He then explains in his next section that "science is not an enemy of religion but an enemy of superstition" and that "both science and religion are engaged in the search for Truth." Raja Yoga is considered an exact science, that of the realization of the subject, as compared to natural science, investigating the objects outside the subject. Science, however, has the limitations of understanding only the outward surface of Nature and not the origin, intentions, and destiny of Nature. These are understood only by the Yogi through direct intuitional knowledge.

The Predicament of Logic, the Fallibility of

Reason, the Sovereignty of the Advaitic Knowledge:—the reader, 'the read'; and 'the referred to'. Joy Dristine, Sivananda and Aristotle.

Aristotle's discussion of intuition as a union with the object itself as opposed to the process of being convinced by reason is considered several sections later in the chapter on intuition. Sri Sivananda ends his observations here with concern over the fact that the conclusions of reasoning are not uniform even in Indian philosophy. He states that there is no logic without the distinction of the knower, the knowledge, and the known, and no Truth with these differences—only where the intellect is transcended by intuition, is complete wisdom in evidence.

The utility to Joy Dristine, of a succession of Sivananda's consideration of the Nature of Brahman, and the obstacle with respect to his understanding of the Indian concept of the ultimate Reality, he has overcome.

Intuition is the vehicle through which the Yogi experiences the all-pervading Brahman. This further consideration of Brahman has been useful to me in finding out more about this Power behind all things. I have had trouble in understanding

this concept and I feel that Sri Sivananda's essays and my re-consideration of class-notes at this time have helped me to overcome this obstacle.

—*Joy Dristine.*

Something of the Confucian analects in the Chinese Literature, Charlotte Plum finds herself reminded of, while reading Sivananda's replies to his devotees' questions—given a chance she would argue on the differences obtaining in the manner of self-expression adopted by the Chinese Sage and by the Indian Sage, and defend the identity of the import their respective teaching reveals.

THE philosopher Sivananda sends his pamphlets from the Forest University of the Vedanta and Yoga Philosophy. He has recorded in his pamphlet, gleams of inspiration attained during his early morning meditation. The emphasis found in the particular pamphlet which I received ssemed to concentrate upon the knowledge of the Self, and the liberation such knowledge brings to the individual.

Several of his daily meditations contained praises describing the Nature which surrounded him. He wrote a very pregnant passage on the glories of the sunrise

—the moment it set its rays upon the earth. Many of his meditations contained answers in poetry-form to various questions he had been asked by his devotees and by others. This Sage's replies reminded me of some of the Confucian analects, although they were not written in the same style.

All of his writings bear witness of the fact that he is perpetually in the state of Samadhi. They all are so very penetrating —not only into the realm of Nature and the minds of men, but also into the essence of the divine Being Itself.

—Charlotte Plum.

The attitude a person applies to life, supplies us with the master-key to the nature of the temperament that is his, the kind of philosophy he holds in his mind, the character of the soul he enshrines, the principles of life he abides by. A grand attitude, a reverential attitude, the right attitude Sivananda brings, as we know and as William has come to see, to life, but the logic that aided William begin his review of Sivananda Literature with a dissertational statement, which in import is, that each individual derives from it just what he or she is dictated to derive by his or her own individuality of nature and mood, to derive, could not help him

obtain an idea from the kind of philosophy with which he is obviously prepossessed, of the Divine Being as at once transcendent and immanent, nor could it find for him in the theology with which he is acquainted the significance of the here and now as against the sole importance of the other world. However, William is persuaded by the powers of his own fine perception, into a feeling that the inspirational message of Sivananda is formed of the inspiration it administers to us for a ceaseless energetic work at an achievement of union with the Divine, and the importance or the value it holds for the here and now.

WHAT one learns from the Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy pamphlets of Sivananda, would vary with the individual. But of Sivananda himself and his philosophy one can gather a few threads. Sivananda himself seems to hold a reverential attitude toward life in general as if he felt that the Divine was not only transcendent but immanent in all things. He may so feel, although I am not sure, that the Divine is both immanent and transcendent. In other words, that it is in all things yet cannot be isolated or found there and that one must rise above the world to become one with the Divine.

I receive also the feeling that Sivananda is somewhat of an enthusiast and activist. In other words the importance of the here and now is supreme in his thoughts; also, what I gather from the great amount of work that he does, is that he is an activist. He has his fulfilment or union with the Divine, and expresses himself through prodigious activity, rather than spend his life in quiet contemplation. If there is an inspirational message in this thought, it must come from these latter two facts, that is, he must inspire us to ceaseless energetic work to achieve or express our union with the Divine and its importance in the here and now.

—*William.*

Chapter Thirty-two

Sivananda & Theodore Cranston

One among the many major methods employed by Sivananda, for affording Man in his efforts at inner evolution, Man at a grapple with the great issues raised by a life ruled by reason, mind, heart, time, space, opposites of experience, dualities of nature, contradictions of feeling, scruples of conscience, war of ideals, divisions of loyalties, fortune and misfortune, the rise of Goodness and the insurgence of Evil, Man at a struggle for gaining glimpses of Godhead, the needed guidance consists in his distinctive art of aiding the interrogating intelligence discover its own answers to the peculiarity of the questions the individuality of its inner nature, endowment, need raises. Thus, consciously to encourage, preserve, and even develop the self-dpendence and the uniqueness of the individuality of each individual, is yet another notable aspect of Sivananda's greatness as world's greatest living spiritual guide. Guided by the stage of his growth in knowledge, and determined by the extent of his equipment and reflection over the matters he deals with, Morton has here below caught some-

thing of this fact and stated it in a kind of clever but inadequately, and therefore, less intelligibly.

Sivananda's turn away from a self-engrossment in the inaccessible altitudes of some infinite illumination, and a self-absorption in the multiple mission kept going by the working of amazing energies, for the manifold benefit of generality of mankind, elicit the specific interest, and, to some measure, quicken into activity the interpretative powers, of Morton.

IT IS said that Sri Sivananda who is the head of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy has reached the state of Samadhi wherein having found his Atman; he may relax and go on to other fields of endeavour. He is too modest a man to claim that pinnacle but his actions seem to indicate this is so. Sivananda left his private practice of medicine to retire to this Northern section of India and build an Ashram. Here he is busy almost twenty hours a day, conducting his Academy, his hospital, his medical relief camps, his pharmacy, his printing establishments, etc.

Sivananda's message is that one must seek one's own answers; he cannot give you the answers to life. Should you ask

him a question, he will turn it back upon you in such a way as to encourage you to do your own soul-searching for the answer.

Sivananda stressed 'conservatism' as a good attribute to emulate. Man by being 'conservative' in all his actions frees his inner self to the higher ways. 'Conservatism' will allow the person to move away from envy, jealousy, and ego-fulfilment. However, I cannot feel he is as 'conservative' as one would expect him. He is not conservative of his energy; he spends same four to five hours in meditation each morning; nor, is he conservative of his time, since he works an exceedingly long day for one living in the Indian climate; nor, is he conservative in the outpouring of his energy and knowledge. He almost never turns away seekers who wish to stay at his establishment, even though they have not turned out as well as a teacher would hope of his pupils. Perhaps, when one has realized one's Atman, one who works with amazning energy and makes impossible sacrifices for helping humanity.

—*B. Morton.*

Unless the ultimate Reality is fully realised, the extremely fleeting nature of the finite life is not completely comprehended, but till that

goal is reached every moment of the fleeting existence, calls with a challenge, for the fullest exploitation and utilization towards the achievement of that End.

Sri Swami Sivananda, discussed, in the pamphlet I read, the subject of the attainment of the realization of the Atman. This he said is not an easy task and must be worked at diligently through meditation. Discipline of the mind may also be achieved during the day while at work if the needed effort is made. He explained that once this Atman is attained all that was a reality in life, formerly, will now appear an illusion. However, Sivananda insists, that one should not relapse from this state and must adopt specific measures to maintain oneself in this state of awakened awareness.

The Swami then emphasises that after attaining this state one should not go off into oneself, but rather should seek to help others attain the same state. He gives several examples of the ways in which this may be done in everyday life.

Theodore Cranston's analysis of Sivananda Literature makes it out as cast in a style, and carrying views; quite modern in tone and form,

and bearing for the import of its substance the ancient Indian wisdom.

From the pamphlet I also learnt of the life and activity of Swami Sivananda who is the Founder of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy in India and maintains a number of charitable institutions for which contributions are to come from the philanthropically inclined public. Sivananda's style of writing and his ideas are quite modern, though his teaching carries much of the ancient Indian wisdom.

—*Theodore J. Cranston.*

Summing up in himself, the positive forces of the Eastern and the Western knowledge, the Doctor in Sivananda, with his masterly and witty treatment of Diabetes, leaves upon the mind of John Bessey an indelible impression. Analysing the trends in the fervent efforts made by Sivananda, John Bessey finds them aimed at a justification of the validity and value of Yoga for every phase and facet of everyday human life.

ALTHOUGH all the articles of Sivananda had many wise words and thoughts to present, the article that sticks most in my mind is the one on *Yoga for Diabetes.* In this scholarly message he provides

a beautiful blending of Eastern and Western knowledge. We are first introduced to this essay by a vivid exploration into the causes of this disease. He uses the examples of persons and who overindulge in sweetmeats. Sivananda follows this rather story-like commentary with a scientific explanation of the conditions in the blood that cause this malady. He stresses the fact that there is such an abundance of sugar, that the insulin gland is overworked and thus falters. The next phase of this study is rather a mockery of the daily insulin shots. Here, he recommends a bodily exercise in Yoga, of pumping the stomach. This exercise stimulates the subnormal insulin gland and makes the diabetic patient return to perfect health.

Sivananda is fervently attempting to justify Yoga practices, and their value, in everyday life. His prime message seems to be one of attempting to do away with the attaching to Yoga the type of mysticality which many Westerners carry to Yoga.

—*John Bessey.*

States there certainly are, of certain types of consummate spiritual experience, not easy of conception to a consciousness lost in the mere

conceptual constructions, almost incomprehensible to the intellectual audience, but appreciably accessible to a perception emergent upon an adequate advancement in an integral Yogic experience, that render the individual in them wholly oblivious of the world without, the world about, him, and of himself as a personality, as an individuality, as something owning a body, as.... Spiritual experiences, the methods of obtaining them, their variety, their results, keep occupied the observing intelligence of Stewart White at his studies in Sivananda Literature.

SIVANANDA wrote primarily about the type of Yoga practice he follows. He begins by listing the physical and psychological fruits of obtaining enlightenment. He shows a universal attitude in stating that he accepted Samadhi, seeing God, realization of the Self, and other terms from various religions as being synonymous and referring to the same state of bliss.

Sivananda says over and over again that a person who has achieved this state shows a contempt for worldly matters, passes less urine, is more relaxed, enjoys meditation, and shows other characteristic traits. The chief means of obtaining this bliss is meditation, he says. He then described the seven states for obtaining this

bliss. Although having different names, they resemble the stages of Raja and Hatha Yoga.

When one is in the highest state (has reached Samadhi) he must be fed and kept clean by others. He is completely unaware of his physical body. Sivananda says, therefore, that it is only in lower stages, that a Yogi can be an active person who helps others. Such a state he calls "double consciousness."

Sivananda also quotes a dialogue in which the distinctions are drawn between the spiritual achievements of the Yogi and the lesser, physical fruits obtained by some who consider themselves to be Yogis. He warns that one must not be captivated by the practice of Yoga, itself, for he will not find the spiritual fruits in such a frame of mind. He also draws distinctions between various kinds of Yoga practice; actually, he states, each person has his own type.

—*Stewart A White.*

Complaisant and complacent Norman contents himself with a capture in a capsule of a conspectus of the Indian formulae on finite life.

in relation to the ultimate Reality.

THE ultimate Reality behind all objects is Brahman which is one with the Atman in man. The goal of every person is to gain a realization of the Atman, and thus escape Samsara by reaching Samadhi. One should use Yoga to strengthen oneself spiritually, and for drawing closer to Samadhi. One's Karma is bettered by good works and by service done to others. To draw closer to Brahman, one should gain a good Karma by good actions. The only true reality is the Atman which is one with Brahman.

—*Norman.*

Kent shifts his standpoint from Sivananda Literature to Sivananda, and has a good idea of the latter as 'a strong personality yet kind and gentle'—but just herein, Kent packs unaware, a clue to a good idea of the Literature!—for, who does not know that personality and its expression whether in writing or in behaviour, man and style, are not two disparate things, but are generally identical, existent one in the other!

EVIDENTLY, Sivananda is very much interested in world peace and world har-

mony. The Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy pamphlets give a good idea of what Sivananda is like—a strong personality, yet kind and gentle.

—*Kent.*

Chapter Thirty-three

Sivananda and Ruth Sutherlin

Where Ruth Sutherlin sets out to see such a Spirit of Saintliness as Sivananda that pours its precious powers into elevated types of altruistic activity, turns out works wrought with words of wisdom, light and sweetness, and seeks to strike more by the impact and instance of its living manifestations, than by the teaching and lessons of its imparted message, a broad significance into the very vitals of the general world-weary human life, Paul stays where he is, and is reminded by the measures of Sivananda for meeting and overcoming the maladies the human body is a heir to, of the spiritualistic cure resorted to by the Christian Scientists.

Memorable is the invariability with which every other Stanford University scholar experiences amazement at the endless energy discharged, and varied talent displayed, by Sivananda's herculean labours for human weal. Besides this amazement, Sharon Timmons confesses of being impressed by the clarity of Sivananda's thought, the lucidity of Sivananda's statement, the universality of Sivananda's message, and by the

accent of Sivananda on love and service that carries a special appeal to the Christian mind.

SIVANANDA who seems to possess boundless energies and talents, is a living exponent of the Power of the Divine within man, and the value of Indian philosophy and religion. This kind of manifestation of the Divine, which is expending its energies in Nishkamya Karma or doing acts with no thought of reward and personal benefit, seems to me to be of infinitely more worth and value to mankind, and to religion in general. I felt Sivananda had more of a universal message rather than a sectarian message. His admonitions on love and service, appeal to most men,—especially to Christians. I was much impressed by the clearness and lucidity of his statements.

—*Sharon Timmons.*

If Sivananda weaves himself into the judgment of Sharon Timmons as "the living exponent of the Power of the Divine within man", the Stanford scholar hereunder, the young Dollas A. Young, who had applied his brilliance at making himself familiar with the fact of a Great individual pressing, by the stress of his

spiritual purity, and as a result of the exercises like meditation, his way into supreme Enlightenment, and yet retracing his steps, with the soul of his being, full of the Light he has known and absorbed into himself, for aiding everyman realize the rights of his life to Peace, Power, Happiness, richness of living,—has in Sivananda one who gives expression in action to the principle of living by, and sharing, one's religious insight and experience.

SIVANANDA'S pamphlet was written in the form of a diary narrating incidents concerned with the daily life of Sivananda. He lives at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy, which he founded, and runs several projects calculated to bring Enlightenment to all mankind.

The pamphlet I read concerned with the incidents relating to his contact with an American lady who was apparently staying in or near his Ashram. The inspirational message that comes through these incidents, is Sivananda's living example of obtaining Samadhi, and going back into secular life for the purpose of disseminating spiritual knowledge. Sivananda demontsrates the principle of living and sharing one's religion.

—*Dollas A. Young.*

Socratic method of transmitting knowledge is proverbial, and every wise man great enough to draw, over the centuries, the attention of the awakened human Mind, to the content, import and value of the words he has breathed out, has his own typical method. And, as to what exactly is the character of the method of the great Sage Sivananda, it is here left to the ability latent in the decision arrived at by Paul after a scrutiny of the manner of Sivananda's response to his interrogators.

I think probably the most important lesson that is to be gained from the booklet I read is, the manner in which Swami Sivananda has addressed those who ask him questions. He gives his questioners utmost attention and consideration, and answers them inoffensively, often using parables which point to his utmost consideration and ease of preaching without sounding like a preacher. He is a fine example of a person who thoroughly listens to what another says.

I read a larger booklet which was a collection of smaller works, called *Asthma, Its Cause and Cure*, although much of the work deals primarily with medical terminology, one can clearly see the infiltration of the

man's spirituality in his advice to the ailing. Proper cleanliness, restful position, and positive thought and approach,—these certainly remind us of the "spiritualistic" cure that a Christian scientist might prescribe.

—*Paul.*

Esteemed by the better self universally subsistent in the human heart, upon which he has left his transforming impact, his elevating influence, his touching goodness, as a great Heart, a grand Heart, a genius' Heart, a giant's Heart, the God's Heart, the pure Heart, the Heart of sweetness, the Heart of all spirituality, Sivananda sustains Love wherever nestling, maintains Truth wherever active, preserves the powers of Goodness wherever manifest, and strengthens those Forces in the world's life, that give human hearts a toughness that will stand the onslaughts of misfortune, a tenderness that resurrects in human acts the life of a Buddha and a Christ, a generosity that gives itself in many gifts of unquestioning, 'indiscriminate', lavish, overwhelming self-sacrifice—this is the type of modern Karma Yogi that can be seen figuring a little in the little pattern of thought Ruth Sutherlin made with such phrases as 'Nishkama Karma',

'Service', 'example of the Ideal he tries to have his readers live by', and so on.

Sivananda's booklet contained a message of altruistic service, and, in many places, thus, sounded like a pamphlet of passages from the Christian Bible. One should not attain enlightenment for oneself, but should do away with the idea of the ego and the personal self, and help others as much as does Sivananda himself. It was interesting to note the list of drugs and medicines prepared in his Ashram, and it certainly is an indication that Sivananda wants to use all the known means to help others, to bring relief to all, to provide happiness to everybody. Rather than to deny the good in existence, it is to be used to help others to a state of mind where peace is attained. Nishkama Karma is exemplified. Some actions are to be done because obviously they are of a nature to be done. Service to others is an action of this sort, to Sivananda. Through such actions an example to others, is offered.

Through Sivananda's booklet I gained assurance that he is not a hypocrite; as an example of the Ideal he tries to have his readers live by, he negates egoism and devo-

tes himself to the service of others. His action is an example that East and West can meet; the spiritual thought of the East need not be held by one man who has attained it, but can be proffered to others to make life meaningful through being useful even as his life is meaningful.

—*Ruth Sutherlin.*

Devoted to lead man closer to the Heart of Divinity, are the labours of the Literature published by Sivananda, says Judith Adams, and proceeds to register an amazement at his 'energy'. Whether clothed in a parable, or packed in a play, or presented in a paragraph, or poured into a single phrase, the wisdom of Sivananda is of universal appeal and application, and therein lies, Judith Adams contends, the key to a knowledge of the reasons for his 'world-wide importance and fame'.

THE Sivananda's booklet is an inspirational booklet devoted to the mission of taking men closer to God. I was impressed by the tolerance and love for all kinds of men, which were expressed in it. One of the sections in this booklet described the daily schedule of the Swami, and I was

amazed at this man's energy—yet his most important period in all the day, no matter what important visitors he has, remains the time which he spends with God, his meditation-period. The parables and advice which this booklet contained were of universal value, and one can understand from reading this, why the Swami has such a world-wide importance and fame.

—*Judith Adams.*

Chapter Thirty-four

Sivananda and Carole Franklin

A mind that lends its genius to every thought it touches, that draws out into broad light, for common minds, from common ideas, the uncommon significances they effectively conceal from the common thinker that the common man whether in the University don or in the pontiff among the peasants is, that awakens from every object it sees, the Divinity it has felt, seen, and known, that, in truth, finds a sage in everyman and a goddess in every woman, that has the sources of its delight on whatever its attention alights, that exercises a perfection in perception that perceives an error even in the best of the judgments pronounced by the best of the judges on earth, that abides by the logic of life and the dialectics of experience which would be valid and obtaining currency in any age, triumphant in all circumstances, torch-lights dispelling all problems whether of the secular or of the spiritual life,—this we know, from our birth into India, our growth on the Indian soil, the sustenance we draw from the air and the spaces of the Indian skies, the environs of the Himalayas we live in, the pulse-beats of the Indian sages we have felt in

our own hearts, to be the truly Indian mind, the real Indian mind, the mind of the Indian sage, the mind in the literature that carried to Carole Franklin a vivid idea of 'the remarkable energy and spiritual insight of a Karma Yogi' that Sivananda is, of the spirit of delight that pervades his whole life, permeates each of his moods, and can be seen reflected in every one of his daily deeds.

Carole Franklin traues the sources of Sivananda's endless energy....The privilege of a great Man to the nimbus of greatness his immortal head wears is the privilege belonging to any common man, if only that common man has the courage to make the needed sacrifices, take to the necessary disciplines for the culture of his personal nature, stake his indolence, his self-satisfaction, his little self and its hundred petty needs, demands, rights, and walk in the wake of those that live by feats of unusual industry, goodness, by acts of rare wisdom, turn out miracles in deeds of love and service....

SIVANANDA'S pamphlet reveals the remarkable energy and spiritual insight of a

Karma Yogi, one who remains active after attaining Amrita. The pamphlet tells about his daily activities which begin early and end late. Swami Sivananda begins his day with several hours of meditation and after that he begins his work. He speaks with people who come to see him, helps each of the students in his School, works at the Hospital, talks with his devotees. He never refuses to see anyone and always cordially welcomes any visitors or other persons who might have questions; his life is one of joy and this is reflected in all that he does during the day.

The endless energy of Sivananda, apparently comes from within himself, from the fact he has attained Samadhi, a state where he need no longer be bound to exercises and other Yoga practices, because he has risen beyond the need of worldly supports. Though the pamphlet is one that merely relates his daily activities, and the way in which he goes about his work, its basic doctrine is to show that Swami Sivananda feels that one who has reached Samadhi should work for other people, and not just retire from the world. This actually is the central message of Karma Yoga—a message that shows that those

who have attained Samadhi, can still work for others and thus help others to reach eventually, that state of beatitude.

—*Carole Franklin.*

Chapter Thirty-five

Sivananda and Rebecca Simonds

A mind born of the substance of the Light that creates what it ideates, that forms an idea only to raise a fact, that touches a fact only to reduce it to an idea, that knows itself, knows what is, is what it knows, has what it needs, needs what it can form for itself, a mind that is by its very will a supreme monarch, by its very nature a mentor, by its very temper and in all its movements a self-master and a world-master, a mind that measures the timeless eternity, sounds its unfathomable depths of silence, and yet spans in moments all the expanses and sacret workings of the world of the Einsteinian relativity, a mind that acts only to formulate afresh for itself, with each of its acts, the Self-delight that is its, is the mind belonging characteristically to any truly representative Indian sage, the mind of Sivananda that has mirrored in its literature the new and the ever-new, yet paradoxically the old and the ever age-old, pathways to the Infinite Being, on the one hand, and to a perfect mastery over the tyrannous circumstances in the infinite world of everyday human action and reaction, on the other, the mind one among whose many

central theses, maintained by life, and articulated by teaching, is representned here below, with much restraint and with no reservations, by Simonds Rebecca.

The foundations of universal brotherhood, Sivananda raises in the very undedrstanding, heart and experience of each individual. Sally McCoy is of the view that Sivananda is that type of a Hindu philosopher and that kind of a Yogi who is in, not for inaction and an obliteration, a blighting of life on earth, but for a dynamic mission and a positive affirmation of the values in life and in the world. Sally McCoy presents also Sivananda's conception of Man, and the variety of facto'rs Sivananda feels would favour a release into 'increasing expression of the true Self' in man.

IN Sivananda's message I learned of the need for religious unity based on the understanding and experience of the oneness of mankind. In the modern world, men must learn to owrk together to fulfil the Divine Self within him. Man must actively participate in the material world, for, it is a part of the spiritual world. This

Hindu philosopher is a Yogi, but an active one; he is not a Sannyasi, retired from the world, but working for bettering it. Education is important; equally important are equality and tolerance; for, we are all seekers after the Being of Beings, our Atman or the Inner Self. Man is basically good: education, social reform, a higher standard of living, will release into increasing enpresion this true Self, and thus, also, indirectly, promote greatly world unity and peace. —*Sally McCoy.*

IN one of the two booklets I read of Sivananda, I found a rather long list of rules to live by. In these Sivananda advocated to his readers such things as casting aside the desires of the ego as an aid in being free for realising the Atman which is one with the Brahman. Sivananda's message was presented in the form of parables. There is one about a prince who gets lost in a shipwreck and is brought up by a poor family in some country. The prince's father, the king, searches for the young prince until he finds him. The prince then has to overcome the ways in which he has been brought up and return to his princely

duties. In the same way, says Sivananda, we have to be flexible and ready to change our role in life, if the need arises. In other words, be detached enough from earthly duties, and then, they do not bind you.

Another parable was concerned with a very poor man who inherits a great deal of money from a rich man in some far off country. However, the poor man cannot collect any of this money until he makes the long journey to get it. The journey will be very difficult without money even though the man will be extremely sick at the end. In the same way, the journey through life towards liberation is difficult. In this pamphlet, the main thesis of this Karma Yogi of the Vedanta school, is that we should perform the duties of this life and act in a charitable way towards our fellowmen and at the same time be detached. Sivananda ended with a long list of inspiring prayers. —*Rebecca Simonds.*

Chapter Thirty-six

Sivananda & Barbara Westinghouse

A mind, a brain teeming with brilliant ideas, the brightest ideas that would easily obscure the greatest name in creative thought not only of the ancient Greece but of the entire modern Europe, a mind driven not by self-consciousness which tortures the merely human mind that painstakingly seeks to stand apart from, stand higher than, others, but by a delight of knowing itself in others, seeing the other sides of itself by seeing the ideas of others, skipping over world's great minds with no objective save the one of distilling from them the essences they hardly suspected as subsisting in the thought they formed, a mind deriving its knowledge directly from the stores of the Divine, and dressing them in the context of the ideas of other minds, or ascribing them to world's great scriptural texts, or attributing them to some name humanity willingly admires, adores and cherishes, for only that way does it give itself some of the highest joys of service, does its reasonable and sweet cunning convey most successfully to a mankind groping in darkness, the Light that enriches its knowledge and its experience, that causes and increases

its happiness, is the mind of Sivananda who impresses himself upon those that approach him either through his literature, or by virtue of an association with him, as an illustrious transcription, an eloquent exemplification, in his own living, of all those excellences he would have any exalted human nature emulate for a rise into supermanhood, and is what Barbara Wesinghouse boldly, without succumbing to any sense of the fear of being contradicted, or criticised for indulging in invidious, or hasty, or far-fetched comparisons, claims him to be.

Never was there a philosopher in India who was not a shining product of the life he lived, in himself the actuality of the Ideal he voiced, an example of the impossible lessons he wrote down, or transmitted to others, a living instance of those ideas which critics of lesser moral verve and spiritual enlightenment comfortably dismiss as sheer abstractions. Unlike his honourable compeers in the West, he never weaves a world of speculative thought, never frames a gigantic scheme of intellectual philosophy, but always gives to the world the Godhead he has grown, he has unfolded, he has awakened, within himself, teaching which is either forced out of his living, or seen flowing spontaneously

from the fullness of his experience. Jean Wells throws a flood of light on the nature of the true philosopher that Sivananda of modern India, is, Sivananda who values not only Reason but also Love, and makes possible, by his very life and teaching, what the world today needs, a universal religion.

SIVANANDA is a modern Indian philosopher. His main principle or idea lies in his recognition of the truth of all great religions; he seems to be the embodiment of the possibility of a universal religion. He has written a book about all great religions, both West and East.

Sivananda believes that the substance of God is always the same, though it is represented in different forms, in various religions. He thinks that these different forms appeal to different people, and even so, the different types of Yoga, he says, appeal to different people. He maintains that Bhakti is easy and should be practised by many. He himself is an extremely active man, practising Karma Yoga, seeing the highest expression of devotion in selfless activity. Another phase of his doctrine is the Value of Love and the possibility of great insight through Love. The first part

of Swami Sivananda's inspirational message concerned itself with the necessity of complete devotion to the Guru, and with the nature of this devotion. —*Jean Wells.*

Nelson receives through Sivananda, a much needed and lasting enlightenment on Yoga conceived as the process by which man gains a supreme command and control over his mind, in conjunction with an equally supreme control he obtains over his physical body and such of its activities and the sources of those activities that hinder the free expression and realization of the inner Spirit, a process that guides man "beyond his ordinary state of existence".... But it is not merely a corrective acquaintance with the nature of the true process of Yoga that Nelson acquires from Sivananda, but also a fuller knowledge of the many principles of action by which such a process itself is conducted.

SIVANANDA'S pamphlet was my first real introduction to the meaning of the Yoga philosophy (outside of the Yogic demonstration given in Cubberly last year). I recognized then the extraordinary control the demonstrator had over his muscles, and I thought, at the time, that this was but an

extraordinary form of physical culture, with no other end in mind, but to achieve this maximum control over one's muscles. While control over one's physical constitution is an integral part of Yoga, it remains only a portion of the "means to an end." The other part, as Sivananda points out, is the supreme command and control of the mind which, coupled with an equally supreme control over the body, prepares man for the state that is "beyond our ordinary state of existence." Control over one and not the other, will not be adequate preparation.

Sivananda says the transcendence of the unimportant concepts and objects of the world, to the true Reality, can be achieved only through complete discipline over the mind and the body. This is the central doctrine. We should strive to achieve this Reality. The booklet is intended to convey this message as well as to discuss the ways for exercising control over our mind and our body. To control the mind and the body, is to free it from the shackles of fear, pain, from seeking only comfort, etc.. that bind it. This makes for a life more real and closer to its true Essence.

—*Nelson.*

The most solicited extroversion of a Sage differs totally from the out-turned nature of the normal human individual, in that the former is a magnificent deployment here on earth, under the pressures of a divine Love for all mankind, of the endless spiritual powers, energies and excellences....

THE extrovert qualities of Sivananda and his complete selflessness in all his work, in his contemplation, in his writing, in his discussions, in his seminarial activity, reveal how one can so busy himself and occupy his every minute of the day to help others and thus gain total satisfaction in life. Sivananda definitely practises what he preaches and is an excellent example of Sri Aurobindo's Superman.

—*Barbara Westinghouse.*

Chapter Thirty-seven

Sivananda and Ron Iverson

A mind that is an instant by instant messenger from the worlds in which the Upanishadic mind gyrrated in illimitable joy, wheeled in the supreme expansions of Consciousness, formulated the axioms of the Life Divine, of the great Realization of the Infinite in the finite, of the Timeless in the durational a process, a mind that moves in the worlds which Swedenberg saw, and also in those worlds to see which he developed in himself no higher spiritual sensibility and range of experience, a mind that is the only inmate and the lonely and aureate President of the world which the mystic experiences of Plotinus opened, a mind that has its rendezvous in the worlds which the Heart of Mira haunted, that owns some of its familiar pleasures in the worlds from which the world's greatest artists, painters, musicians, philosophers, have derived their visions, their insights, their perceptions, their ideas, their very genius.... This, then, is the Mind of Sivananda which Ron Iverson has been afforded an occasion to study a little, just a little....

The intellectual acumen of Jim Delomy interests itself in Indian metaphysics, and if one were to

interpret Brahman in the kind of Western terms he brings from the one whom he has evidently studied, one would be leading oneself to a misleading meaning, and a consequent misunderstanding and insulting of the fundamental Indian thought. Jim Delomy has permitted his mental penetration expend in vain its energy in drawing a distinction between the Brahman and the Atman, in a way that is not really meant, and it is quite amusing, if not a little preposterous, to argue that the realization of Brahman calls for an extraverted personality, while the realization of Atman would demand an introverted temperament. The context in which Sage, Sivananda gives his direct advice, "....mix with all, include all", does not, whatever meaning it may yield when wholly isolated from the rest of the message in which it is given, countenance a reading into it the suggestion of an 'outgoing, extraverted personality'.... Nor does his instruction on the possibility of a realization of Atman by silencing the boisterous mind, encourage us form the opinion that an attainment of Atmic-realization requires an introverted personality....

IN the Vedanta section of Swami Sivananda's book, *Easy Steps to Yoga,* one finds frequent reference to the Brahman and the Atman. Sivananda claims that

both Brahman and Atman are identical. The Brahman is referred to as 'the unseen Governor or Master', and 'the supreme Being'; on the other hand, the Atman is called 'the infinite Self', and the 'Immortal Soul.' Interpreted in Western terms, the Brahman is, according to Kurt F. Leidecker, 'the impersonal, pantheistic world-soul, the Absolute.' Atman can be stated in Western terms as the 'Self, Soul.' Although the Western terms indicate a dissimilarity between the Atman and the Brahman, Sivananda maintains that they are the same thing.

Sivananda states also that realization of either Atman or Brahman brings a man eternal bliss or Ananda, and aids him in stepping out of the wheel of Samsara. Since realization of either of these two entities is supposedly a difficult task, Sivananda offers helpful suggestions to the would-be fugitive from Samsara. In order to realise the Brahman, Sivananda has this practical advice, "Behold the one homogeneous Self in all....negate the illusory names and forms; try to be one with the underlying immortal essence....mix with all, include all." Thus, the Sage suggests that an outgoing, extroverted personality—

one that embraces nature and tries to comprehend its pantheistic qualities—be used in order to realise the Brahman. For realization of one's Atman, Sivananda offers advice which differs somewhat from his advice pertaining to the Brahman. He says, 'Transcend these five sheaths (mind, body, etc.) by attaining knowledge of the Self and be free.... Silence is within. It can be felt or realised by silencing the boisterous mind.... Silence is Atman.' Contrasting the two forms of instruction, one finds that realization of Brahman calls for an extroverted personality, while realization of the Atman requires an introverted personality.

—*Jim Delomy.*

[In the context of the conception of greatness portrayed by the nineteenth century literary genius, Thomas Carlyle, an examination of the results of Ron Iverson's studies in Sivananda Literature.]

That was a nineteenth century literary genius, Thomas Carlyle that wrote that 'great men are the commissioned guides of mankind, who rule their fellows because they are wiser'. Were Carlyle in India, or one among the Stanford

University students that are required to read Sivananda, he would have been certainly acquainted with the type of greatness that is distinctive of the soul of India, and that consists not in being wiser than one's fellows, but in a gentle recognition of wisdom in one's fellows, and persuading them by the example of oneself, to the possession and exercise of greater wisdom, in being a Person that pours universal beneficence, a Heart that submits itself to the exercises of rendering continued services to all, rules others by the overwhelming Love it gives them in the form of sacrifice, service, guidance, a greatness personified by Sivananda, a greatness consisting in the sweetness of Nature that purges poison itself of its elements of venom, in the softness of temper that wears out granite itself, in the gentleness of manner that finds a gentleman and a superior even in the meanest of mankind, and sets itself to a dynamic performance of such tasks as are of the utmost utility to all men, in all possible ways....Carlyle would have been delighted to know that genuine greatness lies not in being wiser than one's fellows, but in actual fact, as the experience of humanity attests, and as our own identification with that experience vouchsafes, is constituted of an inspiring, a disarming, an endearing, Presence that is valuable to the whole personality of mankind, that touches the deepest chords in the

heart of Man, that wields on us the effects of uncommon personal excellences, exerts uniformly on all an edifying influence, and bequeaths by the style and pattern of its life, for every man a light that awakens the highest aspirations, makes for the best of self-culure, and leads life into its ultimate Value. And this does not comprehend wholly the whole of the sunshine of greatness in which the soul of India basks; for, there is the other aspect to this greatness consisting in the framework of reference in Reality the Indian great man acquires and evidences in everything that he does, that he says, that he knows, that he feels, that he teaches less and less as a Teacher and more and more as a Friend, a Mother, a lovable Servant ministering to our deepest needs, less and less as a wiser fellow and more and more as genial Presence, a warm Presence, a magnanimous Presence, a Presence that persuades us by its deeds, by its achievements, by its own life, by the benefits it has brought us, by the sacrifices it has made for us, by the services it has rendered us. Again, the quiet manner of Sivananda's speaking, his soft way of addressing every man, are something impossible for a great man who feels that he is wiser than his fellows, and also impossible for a great man who has no such feeling but is acknowledged by the world as wiser than his fellows, and are possible only for the great man

of the type of Sivananda, and that quiet manner of speaking is an impressive evidence of the tranquillity that characterises his great Mind, and that soft manner of addressing is a positive proof of his recognition of his fellows as supremely valuable in themselves, deserving unconditional reverence and bringing into play in his Consciousness, in his awareness, in his experience, a perception of his own inner Self in them, a finding of his own essential being in them, a fact that comes into fullest operation whenever he addresses others, or addresses himself to others, or communicates with others, and is apparently relaxed wherever he is found in the circumstance of ministering services in knowledge, in light, in guidance, to each according to the difference in his temperament, endowment, stage of evolution, nature of individuality....

SIVANANDA impressed me very greatly by his mild and edifying manner in all actions. The pamphlet was continually stating, "he sweetly said," or "he said quietly." By this gentle manner, he turned a question by one of his visitors into a very interesting lesson. The visitor asked him if eating sweet-meats was holy even though he did not truly taste them. To answer this Sivananda said, "not tasting, not feeling, not smelling is the true

Atman." Thus from a simple question he was able to teach us the unimportance of physical senses and show us that the Self or the Atman which is the divine "I" should be separated from the 'me' and the physical, material objects of life.

Sivananda brought to the reader's attention the fact that silence is golden. He said that we should talk and say as little as was necessary. In another section he taught us of the necessity of being generous. Thus, if the readers combine the message of all the sections of the book, they will realise that Sivananda is giving us an ethical principle by which we should guide our life. This pamphlet although of a religious nature can be applied even in the daily life of a Christian.

—Ron Iverson.

Chapter Thirty-eight

Sivananda and Richard Pearson

A mind that is itself the genius it admires, the godhead it adores, the beauty it pursues, the parent of the wisdom it comments upon, the patron of the thought it forms by the very processes of interpretation, that brings into being a meaning not obviously meant by the life it touches, not borne by the knowledge it commends, an original mind of all submerging individuality, a maker of the light where light was not for the normal intelligence, a magnificent mind that can dismiss, in a way unchallengeable, in a manner unquestionable, from a viewpoint incontrovertible, from a height of thought inapproachable, a Shakespeare as a child or raise a simple University girl to a status greater than the one owned by a Plato, or to a position above the Graces the Greek world knew and named,—this is the Mind of the Modern Indian Sage, the Indian sage that Sivananda is, the stamp of whose personality, the insignia of whose spiritual greatness, the power of whose all-embracing wisdom, the beauty of whose sublime simplicity, the grandeur of whose pervading Presence, are there imprinted upon each word in the literature that

has percolated itself into the prescribed courses of the Stanford University....

Comparing Sivananda to the Buddha, in the compulsion in feeling they mutually share, of helping human life touch Enlightenment, Fioira de Groot is yet struck by the former's total oblivion of the great importance he enjoys, of the momentousness of the status of transcendence he has obtained....a phenomenon that furnishes the general mind in its growth towards, and attempts at an understanding of, life in its finest formations, at its pre-eminent position, a tangible example of the man who has gone beyond the condition of sleep in which, and of somnambulance by which, mankind in general lives.

SIVANANDA stresses the importance of using wisdom combined with discipline to reach the right direction. What struck me was his complete unawareness of the great importance of the position he has attained. It is a tangible example of a man who has gone beyond the semi-conscious state in which we all live, and like the Buddha feels compelled to help others to reach at least an awareness of the ultimate Reality in Existence.

The implications inherent in these two short dissertational paragraphs presented by Fioira de Groot, on Sivananda and the purport and the purpose of his literature, convey to us the impression that Sivananda is no petty prophet readily reconciling himself to play the role of a reformer, but essentially a Power that transforms spontaneously the character of the human life around, by the very fact of its inspiring Presence, by the illustrious example it constitutes in living action, and that his writings are no effusions of a literary artist of an almost boundless imagination, but a sustained expression of his devotion to the world's well-being and its progress in higher knowledge, culture, happiness, the automatic effects through the versatility of his gift and attainment, of the completeness of spiritual Enlightenment he has come to live in and from.

Sivananda does not wish to reform others, but rather by his very striving for an understanding of his own Atman, he sets an example of the right way to so many others. In his writings we find an earnestness in seeking to disseminate his message of spirituality far and wide.

—*Fioira de Groot.*

A keen mind, a good sense of humour, a generosity that includes every man on earth, a magnetism that draws to its own doors all the world, a mead of praise poured on talent be it negligible or nascent, a word of guidance given in reverence and love to each however unworthy or undeserving each be, a principle of life kept however trying be the conditions or circumstances in which it is adhered to,—these elements go to compose the marvel-evoking mosaic of high Eminence that hallows the Name of Sivananda whenever it introduces itself, and wherever it itinerates.

SIVANANDA'S pamphlet taught me that the Swamiji is still full of activity for his years which are more than seventy. He arrives at his office every morning between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m., no matter how good or bad the weather is or how much he would prefer to stay at home. He is kind to every one; he is generous and gives books to anyone he feels can use them. He is helpful toward everyone; he has a keen mind and a good sense of humour. His Ashram is filled with people from all over the world. The different cultures exchange their values by entertainment in the evening. Even those who are not good singers are asked

to sing their native songs as Swamiji believes everyone should do something.

A very vital message is shown when a man comes to acquire a book on "How to Become Rich", and Swamiji gives him a book on developing the mind, telling him that this sort of wealth is more valuable than material wealth.

—*Richard W. Pearson.*

The experiences of Kent Cosady with Sivananda's writings make an interesting reading, and embody implicitly such high principles that ensoul the creation of enduring spiritual literature.

SIVANANDA makes a very dynamic presentation of those principles of action which take us to gain total Self-awareness and liberation. Sivananda seems to write with such energy that when I start reading, I keep wanting to go faster and faster. He makes each sentence sound so urgent; a "right-awareness" pervades the whole booklet; also, Sivananda seems extremely certain that whoever follows him will achieve his goal. It seems to affirm here

is the true, the real way for an achievement of liberation.

—*Kent Cosady.*

Chapter Thirty-nine

Sivanada and Robert Linneman

A mind that does not strain science to span, by sputniks, or by satellites, the skies, but relaxes itself only to roll up, by virtue of the endless creative possibilities and energies it has unfolded in itself, the stellar reaches and all that is beyond their nebulous background, into a single corner of its inconceivable and ineffable being, a mind that witnesses within minutes, a trillion world-cycles, that views in an instant the Babylonian, the Egyptian, and even the ever-enduring Indian, civilizations, as unrecognizably small points and dots on the vast canvas of world-history and the history of the universe, a mind that is the super-aesthetician, tracing all Beauty wherever represented, to its own inner being, and gifted enough to reduce the Lake Poets of England to a set of barbarians in the field of aesthetic creation, a mind that knows through each act of thought things that nothing in the human mind can create or comprehend, a mind self-conditioned to deal with the eternal laws that govern all manifest Nature and that rule all organised life....this is the Mind

something of which remains revealed in the written words that wrote their way into the studies of the Stanford Scholars.

What does a great Mind leave at every turn of its literature, but a great lesson, a great message, a grand idea that has enough force and the needed relevancy and urgency to force itself into everyday living! The cultivation of an altruistic attitude, the culture of emotions, the need for a continued control over oneself, the pursuit of the good of others, the nature of the the condition that precedes a perception of the good in all things—it is messages on these that Robert M. Linneman finds in Sivananda Literature.

THERE were a number of different messages that were given. One of the most basic ones was that in the practice of Yoga. It is more important to put the ego in the right place than undergo physical exercises. One must subjugate one's ego and strive toward an altruistic attitude toward other people. One should also be in a position to master one's emotions at all times. One should love children, strive to keep a clean mind, for only that way will one see the good in all things. First of all,

man should always have control over himself, both over his emotional actions and his mind, and seek the good of all.

—*Robert M. Linneman.*

Whatever may be the methods prescribed or employed by Zen Buddhism for a quick Realization, Yoga practices presuppose, as Linda Martin points out from her knowledge of Yoga derived from a booklet published by Sivananda's Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy, prolonged exercises in self-discipline. Quick results yield no lasting benefits. The attempt to conquer human nature is comparable to the labours of Sisiphus of the Greek mythology. And those that undertake to guide the earnest aspirants must be stalwarts in spiritual experience and power....as great as the Gurus Linda Martin has known them to be through Sivananda's written words.

THE booklet that I received from the Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy of Sivananda concerned with the relation of the Guru with his student, and thus, contained concepts which we learned in other parts of the course, but these were further elaborated; one parable I especially remember. Sivananda explains the 'closeness'

of the relationship between Guru and student; he says that the relationship will be long lasting and that the student must choose his Guru carefully. But, because of the Karma concept, which affirms that the Guru takes on himself the Karma of the student, the Guru also is to be selective in his choice of students. The Guru is to help the students gain Samadhi or the realization of their Atman and its relation with the ultimate Brahman. Thus, the Guru takes upon himself, his students' Karma. If the student gains Samadhi, his Karma will cease; if otherwise, the Guru is responsible for it. It is for this reason that the Gurus have only a few students. Realization or Enlightenment, in the Hindu faith, is not as easy and sudden a matter as in some schools of Zen Buddhism, but usually requires Yoga practice which may take a long time before the last stage or Samadhi is reached. So, the relationship long lasting is maintained, and the two must be compatible.

The parable I spoke of, dealt with this relationship and its fruits and contains an interesting theory not common in the West, but wide-spread in the East.

—Linda Martin.

What else is it that impinges most upon one's attention in the writings of Sivananda directed to 'give people a fundamental grounding in spiritual matters', save Sivananda's own modesty, says Deve Bess who means to equate Sivananda's works with Sivananda's 'immense capacity and dynamic abilities'.

THE Sivananda's writings published at the Forest University show, most of all, the immense capacity and dynamic abilities of the author. The one I received brought information on only a few of his activities, yet one has the idea that he must be everywhere at once, taking charge of difficult matters, and seeing them through to completion.

In his writings the most evident thing is his modesty and his regard of himself as only a part of the group—he gives much credit to his co-workers. Finally, they give us a picture of the level on which a religious mission must function in India—trying to improve the lives of the people by introduction of basic health and educational practices and a giving to all a fundamental grounding in spiritual matters.

—*Deve Bess.*

In the Sivananda pamphlet one could indeed see the vitality and activity of this man's life reflected through his writing. My particular pamphlet concerned itself with Guru Bhakti Yoga, the teaching of the perception of the Ultimate through activity of love and adoration in the practice of Yoga of service to the Teacher. Sivananda has realised Atman through the practice of Yoga, and now through this pamphlet he has endeavoured to bring others to the same realization. Sivananda's standpoint is like that of the other late Hindus, the philosophy of Vedanta, the logical culmination of the Vedic tradition towards a monotheistic concept of the Ultimate, known as the Brahman. This ultimate Being can be perceived through the discipline of love and adoration which is actively carried out by the individual not only during his Yoga meditation, but in his activities, through out the day. This teaching of Sivananda is also a very tolerant and sincere teaching as is revealed in his pamphlet and reflects how his monotheistic concept of Brahman has come about through an intellectual elimination of the other lesser Devas towards this more universal spirit which indeed is the essence of all religions in the world. —*Michael I. Katzev.*

Chapter Forty

Sivananda and Clive Hany

Richard's concern is with one more unique function, a yet another piece of noble work, executed by the Literature of Sivananda, of Sivananda whose is the religion of no-religion, the religion that dispenses with temples and raises a shrine and an altar to the omnipresent God wherever a pious feeling in the human heart arises, that does away with the dogmas and has for principles of life and action the instincts of Love, the impulses of Goodness, the irresistible urge towards a contemplation upon that which is the great centre and source of all Existence and the ground of all that is beyond that of which it is the centre and source, a religion that makes each man his own priest, his own Bible, his own guide, his own way, his own strength, a Light unto his own feet. The religion of the Buddha, or of Sivananda, or of any other World Teacher as a matter of that?—A prophet in his own right, a prophet arisen of the Godhead he has realised, and he now bears in each act of his experience and expression, a prophet who takes man back to the sources from which the Enlight-

ened Minds, through the ages, guided the world to the Light of all life and of all thought, Sivananda, Richard says, liberates Buddhism from its tyrannous fetters of institutionalism, the accretions of dogmas, the human interpollations, into the free and fresh atmosphere in which the Buddha breathed his thought and gave his wisdom—here then we have a yet another noble work, one more unique function, executed by the written works of Sivananda.

The Impractical East is supremely practical 'somewhere'.....where but in its Soul, in its Essence, in its Consciousness, in its Thought, in its inner Life, in the formation of that which endures, in the works that establish for human life a relation between itself and the Eternity, in the causation of the forces that sustain its never-dying civilization, in the structuring of the greatness that speaks through its immortal culture, speaks over the dead bones of the Grecian culture, over the fossiles of the Babylonian and Egyptian cultures....Clive Hany leaves with us a verdict on the qualitative works raised to a superlative degree, by the Vedantins of the category represented by Sivananda.

VEDANTA believes in the oneness of the Ultimate. The phenomenal world has

no essence; the only essence and reality is to be found in the spiritual, the non-phenomenal world. There are two types of Vedantic Swamis. The first type does nothing but contemplates and meditates on the other world in a trance-like Yogic state. The second type with which Sivananda's pamphlet is concerned, is that of those Swamis who realise that even though the world is only phenomenal, good works and energy expended in disinterested service become essential for reaching Samadhi. Some of the finest and most worthwhile works have been accomplished by the Swamis of this second type.

—*Clive Hany.*

Wealth is yet another formulation emanating from the Divine Power as Mahalakshmi, the Lady of the Lotus-groves, the ensouling and sustaining substance of all wealth, worth, weights, values, the formative force of the atom in matter, the cell in man, the idea in mind, the material with which Nature paints the rainbow, colours the parrot and the peacock, covers the forests with the green, stores coal in the mines, preserves oil and water under the ground, the manure that brings into being an abundance

of corn, the clouds that pour the rains, the winds that run the wind-mills, the power in the Naigara Falls, the power that sets our very globe wheel through the skies in dizzy delight, the secret and real owner of all the steel in Stalingrad, the sterlings in the Bank of London, the dollars in the Wall Street, the marble in the Taj Mahal, the value resident in the artistic creations of Leonardo da Vinci and Dante, the beauty informing the Ideal World in the brain of a Plato, the Bounty of Love and Kindness in the heart of a Christ and a Sivananda....Everybody knows wealth is a power dragged down to the meanest of uses, the best of abuses, the worst of misuses, by the meanness, the distortions, the degeneracy of the nature that handles it, and also the power raised to the noblest of functions, the highest of values, the means of virtue and splendid accomplishments by the nobility, the divinity, and the magnanimity of the nature that employs wisely its services. Given to Silas Marner, we would have a character of that name and that nature most ably delineated by the masculine intellect of George Eliot. But, then, what type of wealth is it that the Literature of Sivananda values and would have all the world prize and pursue? Richard Pearson provides the answer on page twenty-three and two hundred.

SIVANANDA'S pamphlet has much to offer as a guide to life in the material, as well as the spiritual, world. He stresses prayer, work, Yoga exercises for the body as well as for the spirit. He emphasises cleanliness of body and purity of mind. He feels that a state of supreme bliss or a union with the Divine, is the prime goal. Once one has achieved this state, he is at peace, and can devote energies to work beyond the self or the ego. He can be lauded for application of his spiritual realization for the benefit of humanity. He has dedicated himself to attempts at raising the level of human beings, idealistically and practically. The work which Sivananda himself has done from his Ashram, is tremendous, and Sivananda is almost a living example of how the energetic force from one's union with the Divine can help one devote one's efforts to benefiting other human beings. Sivananda has overcome the petty ego to the point that he can work tirelessly for others.

—*Boccardo Leonne.*

Not anger, however mild or overdone, but calm and great understanding, not impatience but kindly sympathy, not compulsion but persuasion,

not criticism but a delightful correction, not imposition but a wise suggestion, not command but an eliciting of their acquiescence, their willingness, not coercion or enforcement but an enlisting of their voluntary obedience,—these, says Sivananda, must be the means of dealing with children. But, how does Sivananda deal with the children that most men are in the wisdom of life, in the growth of the soul, in the energy that acomplishes enduring things, in the works that bring them good and benefit others? That is a question we bequeath to the students and scholars that make the Sivananda Literature the subject of their study.

THOUGH in the form of a diary written by one of Sivananda's followers, the Sivananda pamphlet did convey to me, through the account of the everyday events at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy, an intellectual idea of Sivananda's message. One of the most striking things conveyed was the personality of the Swamiji himself. He seemed to be always very kind, and unassuming, and the primary characteristic seemed to be his sweetness. He was very obliging to people who wanted to take his photograph. His sense of humour as well as his feeling of the oneness of men was

conveyed by an incident in which he introduced a Chinese to an American and said, "same eyes....and same sweetmeats." His doctrine that everything changes and nothing remains static was displayed through practical occasion when a woman had to stand instead of sit, and he pointed out that it was her turn to stand for she had sat for a long time.

Sivananda advocated spontaneous generosity and kindness and would give money or food to those who come to see him. He also advised a woman who put some money in a collection box to put in all that she had. There must be a giving without the thought of reward.

In himself Sivananda is the touchstone of that type of greatness which turns a Person universal, cosmic, of all mankind, one whom the Chinese, the Americans, the Europeans, the Negroes the Indians, the Russians, the Australians, the Hindus, the Muslims, the Buddhists......claim as their own......and in relation to whom, each becomes a brother unto the other.

Sivananda says that it is a good teaching to repeat "Ram, Ram, Ram" and that

the way to overcome pain is to become free of it, or unaware of it, with the mind, so that Being and Experience itself behind pain is the more important. He seemed to have a joy in experience and in people, and at one meeting had a German and a Hebrew speak in their own language even though no one understood them, for it was a way of becoming familiar with other men and other ways of life. He was an inspiration to others, even for their writing of poetry. One saw the picture of a man who had attained Enlightenment, freed from Samsara, and who was actively resolved in everyday life. Yet Swami Sivananda was beyond the mere occurrences of everyday life and was living on a higher sphere of consciousness, whose essence others caught glimpses of as they saw him in his daily life. One person mentioned that he saw the Divine manifested in Sivananda.

—*Barbara Olson.*

SIVANANDA'S modes of thinking remove the fetters of the Buddhist religion that sprang up after the death of the Buddha; Sivananda attempts to go back to Gautama's original thought. Man must

find salvation in his own soul and must not look for it outside of himself. Sivananda's thinking rests on such principles of universal love as that we must love all humanity, for all men are but a part in God's scheme. We must lead the simple life and train our minds on good things. We must not allow our minds to be filled with such thoughts that arise by reading trashy novels and going to the movies. He preaches a religion essentially of no religion—no temples are needed, no high priests to officiate, no status, no pictures! Once we have found this Enlightenment, we must not keep it to ourselves, but help the rest of mankind attain it. Sivananda is an epitome in life, of his own words, his own teaching.

—*Richard.*

SECTARIANISM is the antithesis of all spirituality, and therefore the Sivananda booklet includes ideas from all the basic religions, and has for its essence the revelation of a broad outlook upon religion—the spirit of the religion of no-religion! I believe the divine life of Sivananda is formed of a synthesisation of the disciplines and

fundamentals of all religions. Expressive in the booklet was the desire for an integration of the basic ideas of all religions—a desire so dear to this Saint of India.

—*Ellen Miller.*

Chapter Forty-one

Sivananda and Paulette Frank

Not so much as merely conceived, as in fact felt and experienced, as the Light of a Consciousness fully awakened and as a consequence incarnating spontaneously in the play of its attributes, in the plenitude of its radiance, its wisdom, its love, something of the Nature of the Godhead, the Light that awakens in the approaching intelligence the urge for a rapid realization of the Self, elevates the aspiring thought to heights of spiritual vision, grants the human heart a foretaste of divine Love, and gives itself as a Presence that can be felt warmly anywhere, a living Thought that infills us with a strange delight and great fearlessness, a commanding Power that demands of the disciple nothing save a self-growth in knowledge, asks of him no homage but an adoration of the Divinity wherever he feels drawn to recognise, receives from him no service save a continued exercise of himself in the best of spiritual disciplines, calls for no prize, no 'dakshina', no payment except a free giving of himself to the Divine Being howsoever he may conceive, name, seek after, an increasing faith in the Truth, and a steadily growing

patience in obtaining it fully,—the Guru in India, is contacted and given a reverence that rises into intense love which has no will of its own except the all-knowing, all-loving, Will of the object of its adoration. Thus, too, is Sivananda felt, experienced, esteemed, loved; and, thus also does Sivananda depict the Guru. Here, then, the students of the Stanford University encounter for the first time a new type of Master, or shall we say, Mentor, Mahatma, Guru, Guide, Godhead! Point by point, an idea after an idea, exclusively concerned with the self-complete discipline of devotion to the Guru, as formed in, and presented by, Sivananda Literature, Kay B. Smith arrays before our attention.

Judicial acumen, the mental endowment of Sivananda does not lack. In fact, saints of his soaring stature and the consummateness of his spiritual perfection, give themselves to a manifold mission for mankind, as repositories, in their own right, of every conceivable excellence. Non-pareil as a persuader by love, sweetness and light, Sivananda yet carves out for himself an attractive niche for argument. A case he makes out here on the spiritual Guide as a

constitutional necessity with humanity. "The desire to seek help, to search for light, to look up to higher powers, is inborn in all beings. The capacity to achieve the ideals of the aspirations that spring from the heart, the anguish which accompanies such incapacity and the knowledge of the existence of the superior powers, obliges the individuals to take shelter under those that are endowed with the ability to lift them up to higher level. The world is a dramatic scene of dependence of beings on others that can fill up what they lack." Carrying the case forward he states, "As the human consciousness is entwined with animal instincts and drives, as man is liable to be confused and deluded by experiences of the surface-consciousness propelling the impetuous worldly will and riotous emotions, the aid of a higher power of knowledge is solicited. This power of knowledge is embodied in the Masters, the Gurus, whom the Sadhaka approaches for help. A glance, a touch, a word from them suffices to lift the soul of the aspirant; and their compassion towards the disciples is proverbial: it is unbounded, a veritable mass of love and wisdom." Not resting content with this, Sivananda seeks, by a canter, to fortify his standpoint, thus, "Cases of those who had attained perfection without study under any Guru should not be cited as authorities against the necessity for a Guru; for such great men are

the 'exceptions' in spiritual life and not the common normality. They come into existence as spiritual masters as a result of the intense service, study and meditation practised in their previous lives. They had already studied under their Gurus. Their present birth is only its continuative spiritual effort. Hence, the importance of the Guru is not lessened thereby.'

SIVANANDA writes in this issue of the Forest Academy Weekly, about Guru Bhakti Yoga. The first chapter is entitled "True Guide of the Seeker". His first point is about the fundamentals of discipleship. The main point here is that the disciple's duty is whole-hearted service of the Guru. This is really the main point. The disciple should be willing to do everything for the Guru at any time. Personal service and complete obedience are the only ways to attain his grace. Also, the disciple should have complete control over his senses and mind.

The second point is *Dharma* in relation to Guru. There can be no Self-realization without the help of the Guru. Thirdly, Sivananda mentions the three modes of nature. In this particular section, Siva-

nanda does again emphasize personal service to the Guru, and shows how it will cleanse the disciple of lust, cruelty, greed, etc., and how a great joy is its reward.

The fourth point in this chapter is total avoidance of sex. The disciple should not associate with the opposite sex but he discusses God-realization through the only with the Guru and with saints. Firstly, Grace of the Guru; for if it is only through the Grace of the Guru that one can be free from Samsara.

Something of Sivananda's dialectical skill forces itself into view, in the following passages written with the specific purpose of rendering clear the nature of the process of the influence exerted upon the disciple, by the Guru. . . .; the passage is a perfect monolethic structure of reasoned thought employed in an attempt at an explanation of the status and the attainment of the Guru and of the manner and type of influence he exerts upon the pupil. 'The transformation of the consciousness of the disciple through being influenced by the Guru is both a subjective and an objective process. Mind is an objectified stress in universal consciousness and is like a ripple therein. The Guru

as well as the disciple are such consciousness-stresses differing only in the degree of the subtlety and the expansiveness of their condition. Each higher, subtler and more expansive condition is more potent and inclusive than the lower. The Guru is a Brahmanishtha, one rooted in the Infinite Truth. The mind of the Guru being nearest to the absolute condition of changeless Existence, possesses limitless powers beyond imagination. The initiation of the disciple by the Guru is a process of the infusion by the Guru of this supernormal force of spiritual consciousness into the grosser state of the disciple's mind which results in the dispelling of darkness and the enlightenment on the mind of the latter. The length of time taken by the process of the disciple's spiritual illumination is directly proportional to the receptive capacity of the disciple and the Consciousness-Force of the Guru.'

Sixthly, Guru is regarded as incarnate divinity. Guru is the veritable God on earth. This too is one of the main points of Guru Bhakti. By worshipping and serving the Guru, the disciple will attain Salvation and wisdom, his doublts will be dispelled and he will have a true friend. Praises of Guru as found in the scriptures is the next theme. Sivananda simply says here

that one will be inspired by studying the eulogy of the Guru Bhakti in the scriptures.

Then comes a short account of the characteristics of the Guru. Without the Guru, the path of God, cannot be found, he says. And again he emphasizes the service of the Guru. Ninthly, the great Love of Guru is discussed. At first I thought he meant that the disciple should have great love for the Guru, but actually it is the Guru that gives great love to the disciple. Sivananda says that the Guru will impart virtues, will remove obstacles, and will give joy. But, the only purpose in life for the disciple is to serve him.

Tenthly, Sivananda stresses the importance of being in tune with the Guru. By this he means that the disciple must be humble; he must meditate, be calm and serene, and must have no desires for anything which is transitory. Guidance for the disciple follows. As before mentioned, service of the Guru is the most important thing. He must worship the Guru, meditate on the Guru, pray to him, be grateful to him and have complete faith in him.

Lastly, in this chapter, the secret of

Realization is brought out. The secret of contacting Reality which is the main point of life, is Guru-bhakti. The second chapter is entitled: "Cardinal Notes on Guru Bhakti." First of all, he discusses the content of spiritual teaching. The disciple must not run after name, fame, power, wealth or sex. And even more important than that, he stresses the point that knowledge is the link between the guru and the disciple.

Fantastic notions conceived in ignorance concerning the real spirit and phenomenon of the relationship formed at its highest, noblest, noetic and gnostic level between the Teacher and the disciple in India, somehow gain general currency both among those that are despised as masses and those that are accorded a reverence for their intellect or ascribed much learning. Sivananda makes himself clear on the nature of the need for and the nature of the Guru-disciple relationship: 'The best agency which can evoke the highest potentiality of knowledge within is a person who has direct realization of the Infinite. This person is the Guru or the spiritual preceptor; he becomes an instrument drawing out the knowledge of the disciple from within.... Ultimately, the universal Being it is that appears as Guru. This is the rationale of Guru-worship

and of the identificatnon of the Guru with God. The Guru is the channel through which flows the grace of God. God becomes visible and works tangibly through the Guru. The surrender of the disciple to the Guru is really an attempt of the individual soul to gain ingress into the Universal Self, through its symbolical expression its aspiration to assimilate itself to the latter, in the act of total resignation of the self to the care of the Guru.'

Next comes Guru-disciple relationship. The disciple must serve the Guru and study the scriptures for twelve years. Once he has accepted a Guru, he must not "divorce" him. To become one with the Guru, the disciple must equip himself with the virtues of absolute detachment from transitory worldly things. This is the third point.

Principles of actions are discussed next. Here he talks of such things for the disciple, to do or not to do as, for example, "never take food before the Guru does; do not disturb him while he is resting or is asleep." Also he says always obey him and never deceive him. and above all, serve him. Fourthly he says that the Guru is the source of higher knowledge. The Guru is

necessary for higher knowledge and God-realization. Service of him is the only means of achieving these. Lastly, Sivananda points out that when serching for the right Guru one must be careful as there are pseudo-Gurus.

The need for spiritual guidance arises from the circumstance urging an inner evolution, the circumstance in which every man on earth one day or the other finds himself in. But then the rarity and the speciality of the circumstance renders the nature of the guidance demanded and given rare and special. The universal Guru, the world-teacher Sivananda states, 'Unless a person is blessed with an exceptionally good power of understanding and discrimination, and with very good spiritual Samskaras, he cannot grasp the meaning and significance of true spiritual life and meditation on God, without direct instruction and guidance from an able and experienced spiritual teacher. Spiritual verities are not matters for mere understanding and intellectual assent but for practical contemplation and conscious association and communion. Had it is to comprehend the value of spiritual life, harder still it is to know the nature of God and man's relation to Him. "A sharpened edge of a razor, hard to tread, a very difficult path

is this—thus sages declare," says the Kathopanishad in regard to the spiritual path. Some compare the difficulty in treading the spiritual path to the effort required in emptying the ocean with a blade of grass! The Kathopanishad again says, 'He is difficult to obtain even to hear of, and even when heard of, he is not known by many. Wonderful is the expounder of this; blessed is the obtainer of this; wonderful is the knower, proficiently taught.' 'Unless it is taught by a teacher, there is no way of knowing it, for it is subtler than the subtle, not to be argued about.' 'Even the Gods had doubts as to this; that is not easy to be known; subtle is this teaching' says Yama to Nachiketas. That which relates to what is the very existence and essence of the mind cannot be known by unaided thinking.'

I think that Sivananda wished to express three main points: (1) wholehearted selfless service to the Guru; (2) Guru is the veritable God on earth; he is not symbolic of God nor does he represent God, but he is God; (3) the disciple must completely detach himself from worldly transitory things especially desire.

Each of these points is mentioned several times especially the first one. I don't

think he would have done this unless he felt them to be most important. At the first reading of these points, I felt that everything was mostly up to the Guru. Very little is mentioned about what the Guru does for the disciple. But on the second reading it comes out more clearly how much he does do for the disciple. He is offering him the ultimate: God-realization and Self-realization. Not only that, he gives him salvation, but also, according to Sivananda, he gives him wisdom, free him from doubts, and he is a true friend. How wonderful for the disciple to achieve not only salvation but also those others!

This is the point that impresses me the most, i.e., just what this particular idea of Guru Bhakti offers an individual. For giving us material things and giving personal service to a Guru, he is able, if he does what is necessary to achieve all this. What security he must feel with his blind faith. and with a Guru to dispel his doubts! How many of us would like to be secure and free from doubts if we could? Those men have really achieved something.

—*Kay B. Smith.*

Sivananda's widely read compendium on Yoga conveys to Paulette Frank, a seed for thought, an idea of the key-note of Indian Idealism, and a knowledge of the first and fundamental requisite of Self-knowledge, consisting in the condition of the transcendence in Consciousness, of the 'I'-principle, of the egoistic individuality and behaviour.

THE thing I got most out of Sivananda's *Yoga Samhita* was a seed for thought. In this book, Sivananda describes at great detail the many different forms of Yoga suited to respective temperaments of the individuals: Karma Yoga for the man of active temperament, Bhakti Yoga for the man of devotional temperament, Raja Yoga for the man of mystic temperament, and Jnana Yoga for the man of rational and philosophical temperament. Yoga is a means to spiritual Bliss which is open to everyone, according to Sivananda.

Sivananda states that the universe is only a projection of the mind, and through control of the mind man can regulate or in a sense "control" his own universe. This control however can only be attained if the ego is abolished, and with the abolish-

ment of the ego comes self-control and Self-knowledge.

—*Paulette Frank.*

The marked tendency in Sivananda Literature towards a liberation of religion from the cramping sensation to which its denominational outfits condition it, an elevation of its leading purposes into an increasing prominence, a reiteration of its essentials, a re-vitalization of its universal message, is primarily an effect of Sivananda's pre-eminent personal realizations in religious insight, and secondarily the result of the catholicity, the anti-sectarian spirit, the all-embracing vision of the Upanishadic thought, his writings embody. True religion has for its habitation the personal religion as against the institutional religion. The religion of Sivananda, of all Saints and Sages, is the religion of the Heart, of the inner spiritual unfoldment, of the life divine, of works that spread universal beneficence, of acts that express an exapanding Love, of deeds consisting in daily self-giving and self-sacrifice for all humanity. The context in which we are drawn to take a particular notice of the above indicated tendency that characterises everything Sivananda pours into print, we discern assembled by the edifying

thesis of Ellen Miller on sectarianism as the antithesis of all spirituality, published on one of the few pages that precede this.

Michael I. Katzev obtains that tractate of Sivananda which has for its theme of treatment the way of union with the Divine through a discovery in spiritual states of consciousness, and an adoration, of the Godhead in the law of the inner being of the Guru.

IN the Sivananda pamphlet one could indeed see the vitality and activity of this man's life reflected through his writing. My particular pamphlet concerned itself with Guru Bhakti Yoga, the teaching of the perception of the Ultimate through activity of love and adoration in the practice of Yoga of service to the Teacher. Sivananda has realised Atman through the practice of Yoga, and now through this pamphlet he has endeavoured to bring others to the same realization. Sivananda's standpoint is like that of the other late Hindus, the philosophy of Vedanta, the logical culmination of the Vedic tradition towards a monotheistic concept of the Ultimate, known as the Brahman. This ultimate Being can be perceived through the discipline of love and adoration which is actively car-

ried out by the individual not only during his Yoga meditation, but in his activities, throughout the day. This teaching of Sivananda is also a very tolerant and sincere teaching as is revealed in his pamphlet and reflects how his monotheistic concept of Brahman has come about through an intellectual elimination of the other lesser Devas towards this more universal spirit which indeed is the essence of all religions in the world.

—*Michael I. Katzev.*

Chapter Forty-two

Sivananda and Ellen Miller

Artists are many; artists belong to a diversity of category; some artists paint pictures, some produce music, some make pen-portraits, some chisel stone into life-like forms, others work wonders with many kinds of material. There are also artists and artists. Above them all, there stands the rare artist, the best of artists, enwrapping himself in the delights of self-culture, self-sculpture, of the nurture of the principles in his being that endure beyond all time-eternity, and are conserved in the being of the Timeless Reality, of the pursuit of a Knowledge of himself in all humanity, of himself in all Nature, of himself in the Divine, the Karma-Yogi who so acts in life that he eludes the insistent manifestations of the ego, is warry in intelligence, ever awake in vigilance at keeping a league away from himself, the claims of the lower self, the crudities of the egoistic modes of consciousness, and plunges each of his energies, the whole of his interest, his will, his being in a self-oblivious absorption in the continued and unbroken services of a varied form to the Divinity in humanity, the Divinity that claims the devotion of the whole

of his heart. He is a Labourer on a grand spiritual scale, working with a secret inner joy that is known to those that take to disinterested works, a servant not of the humanity as such, but of the Divinity in humanity the soul in him is susceptible to, the feeling in him senses as a palpable Presence, the energies in him gravitate themselves towards, with an overwhelming passion and force. This is the Karma Yogi, living a life in accordance with the rules of the inner Self, in conformity with the laws of a Nature that transcends anything conceivable on earth, a life lifted up into selflessness and stationed there, a life lived in self-sacrifice, in unquestioning self-giving, a life laid in the very spirit of the type of service that looks for no reward, asks for no privileges, seeks for no results, a service that strains itself towards nothing save for the needed grounds, and an unimpeded opportunity, for exercising itself and exhausting the last pint of the residual potencies of self-sense, egoistic behaviour, individualising, finitising tendencies, exercising itself for turning into an Impersonal Power, universalising, infinitising itself, again, exercising itself for the transmission to the unhappy humanity on earth something of the delight of the Divine Existence. These are the artists that Mother India, not the

Miss Mayo's India, but the India of Madura Meenakshi, the India of Kanchi Kamakshi, the India of Kashi Visalakshi, nurses in her lap. And what literature is it that these Karma Yogis make! The answer is the Sivananda Literature.

In its true sense, and in its true spirit, Yoga has for its mission the taking up of the human mind and draining it of all its animal nature, a restoration to it of its creative and paranormal powers, its capacity to stand above pain and pleasure, its nature to remain unaffected by grief or gain, its resources for being useful to all that breathes, and for the Life Divine.
Unawares, Ellen Miller constructs in the detailed review she made of Sivananda's 'Yoga in Daily Life', a complete structure of the philosophy of perfect Life, a comprehensive view of the principles of integral Yoga deployed from Sivananda's Mind, for a methodical elevation of human life into its native intensities and richness.

TRUE Yoga, says Sivananda in his *Yoga in Daily Life,* is a mastery over mind —and, this is the objective of Yoga Sadhana. One must be unshaken by grief loss, anger, lust, and greed. One must curb egoism and selfishness: one must not be swayed by likes and dislikes; one must

value the needs of others above one's own, and engage one's mind in the contemplation of His all-pervading presence."

Sivananda's analysis of the goal man unconsciously and consciously aims at, with every breath he draws in his life—Sivananda's thesis is that man misfires his efforts at reaching it, searches for it in the wrong places, and reaps, as a result, wasted years, frustrated hopes, and an abundance of pain. . . .

Sivananda brings out man's basic characteristic consisting in seeking for happiness, and in avoiding pain. Man seeks pleasure in sensual, worldly objects which are perishable. There is sorrow even in the height of the enjoyment of worldly pleasures. Man will never achieve freedom from pain—as pleasure and pain are interdependent. "For every one anna of pleasure, there are fifteen annas of pain. Pleasure is delusion and one who seeks pleasure, gets entangled in Maya. One must rather seek eternal peace in the Atman of one's own heart—Atman which is the embodiment of bliss. Swami Sivananda shows his insight into psychology when he stresses the fact that one must

not scan and repress irrelevent and worldly thoughts, as this will only bring the thoughts back, grown even stronger. Rather one must concentrate on divine thoughts—on the Atman—and then the irrelevant thoughts will gradually disappear. Thus one must get out of the entangled net of pleasure and pain; one must extinguish mundane thoughts through a concentration upon OM and thirdly, one must learn to control the body first and then the mind, through prayer.

A short maxim of Sivananda incorporates some of his main ideas: "Strive ceaselessly for Self-realization. Kill this little ego. Develop pure love. Rise above all distinctions of caste, colour and creed." It is interesting to note the word caste—as in the Hindu religion, the idea of Karma is closely connected with the caste system.

Sivananda stresses the fact that secular or human knowledge "thickens the veil of ignorance". That one can only gain true enlightenment and wisdom through the realization of the Atman. This consideration of the spiritual opposed to the secular knowledge by itself is found throughout the work of Sivananda. The

importance of the Guru is stressed and how one must never look into the defects of a Guru. One must study, obey and carry out the Guru's orders. For, behind the Guru is the all-pervading consciousness and if this is recognised, the physical form will vanish and one will through experiences with the Guru, begin to gain Self-realization.

Sivananda discusses the particulars of Yoga—for example, the strict diet for the Yogi. Food plays an important part in giving rise to various senses and passions. Therefore, the Yogi's diet must be simple and plain (rice, fruits, milk) and all highly seasoned foods (meat, onions) are forbidden. There are two main classifications of Yoga: 1) the path of activity and detachment—the attaining of the cosmic vision through diverse experiences of normal life; 2) the path of absolute renunciation.

The fourfold temperamental classification of humanity and the corresponding forms of Yogas. With specific reference to the primacy of the ethical Ellen Miller finds stressed in Hinduism, we may record a remark that the prejudiced view of some Occidental critics of Indian thought

that Hinduism lacks ethical content, is purely a product of pride and ignorance, ignorance of the fact that Hinduism can conceive of no aspirant to Truth, no lover of God, no candidate to spiritual Life, no new recruit to religious experience, who is not ethically perfect, pure in personal nature, has not undergone prolonged preliminary disciplines that are distinctively ethical in import and expression.

Sivananda discusses four types of Yoga: 1) Bhakti Yoga for devotional temperament; 2) Karma Yoga, for active temperament; 3) Raja Yoga for emotional temperament of which the majority of people have; 4) Jnana Yoga—renunciation—a temperament of the minority.

Bhakti Yoga stresses intense devotion and Love of God. The qualifications are; a pure loving heart, faith, innocence, simplicity and truthfulness. Those characteristics which get in the way of Bhakti Yoga are, for example, desire for power, fame, egoism, hypocrisy, lust and anger. It is most important that such characteristics as these be annihilated—one must destroy desire for all sensual things. One of the important acts of Bhakti Yoga is Japa. The repetition of the name

of the Lord, Japa, can be done by verbal expression; by humming or by mental expression. Most of the sayings end with the powerful word—Om. Sivananda says that one must become the embodiment of goodness—to do good to all living beings. Here again is a stress in Hinduism on the primacy of the ethical.

To bend feeling into an attitude of adoration given to a high Presence, or to an obejct of devotion, or to an article of lasting beneficence, to turn common things into items of beauty, to pour grace into the style of service, to be calm where the circumstance calls for the play of anger, to be patient where the occasion demands impatience, to be long-suffering where a quick reaction seems to achieve the end in view, to be kind, helpful, generous, artistic, angelic, graceful, devotional—these are constitutional, natural, instinctive with women; therefore, is the appeal of Sivananda Literature to all women to make of their homes devotional and heavenly, wholly justified and is bound to be in no small measure fruitful.

The position of women is discussed by Sivananda. It is women's duty to create a devotional home—to be of service to her

husband. But the woman should not be considered inferior to the husband, but rather both should live in mutual co-operation. (This idea is indicative of the trend in the East.) In conclusion of this discussion on Bhakti Yoga, it is emphasised that one must not be influenced by public opinion—but must follow the path of Truth. One is not to show outward renunciation—as the world is the best teacher as long as one consults his inner conscience.

Only a strain of infra-rationality, a streak of lop-sidedness in insight and in experience, would drive a religion to force everyone of its adherents follow a single, narrow, path, a single mode of worship....Hinduism is unlike other religions. Call Hinduism by any other weakness, but grant it, in all fairness, in all justice, its own greatness consisting in the genius with which it has hewn a unique way, a distinctive path, an individual road, in keeping with, to suit wholly, the uniqueness, the distinctive temperament, endowment, need, the individuality, of every seeker among mankind, of every man, every lover of God, or of Truth, or of some highest End conceived by his nature, his vision, or for him, by one who has obtained perfection in the nature,

or by the nature, he represents, as the summum bonum of life. The idol-worshipper, the idol-breaking Vedantin, the self-torturing Tyagi, the priest grown fat on the sacrificial and sacred feasts, the world-negating Sannyasin, the world-affirming Karma Yogi, the irreligious and godless Sankhyan thinker, the fanatically religious Vaishnavite, the Rajayogic worker of wonders with the mind, the mind-destroying, mind-annihilating Hatha Yogi standing on a single leg in some unknown spot in the icy-Himalayas, the loud-chanting Bhakta of emotional effusions, the logic-chopping reasoner reasoning his way into the heart of an arid Reality, the Naiyayikas, the high-souled and sweet-natured Brahmin shying away from the rabble, mentally repeating some hermetic formula, some great Vedic or Upanishadic Mantra that keeps him in touch with the awareness of the Divine and its omnipresent Power, avoiding sights not conducive to his inner spiritual development, keeping his will resolutely away from an entrance into such situations of life that cannot but adversely affect the spiritual ascensions of his inner nature, binding his body to the greatness of his soul, by a number of self-imposed disciplines, by a close adherence to the prescribed scriptural injunctions, by an observance of periodical fasts, a keeping of fortnightly vigils, a performance of ritualistic practices that condition his being to

the way and characteristics of the Divine, a habitual pursuit of the inspirational content of the scriptures, wont to see both in the Pariah and the high-placed, the same Deity he secretly adores, yet avoiding both as neither in aspiration, nor in nature and temperament, nor yet in the exercises of purity, do they share with him any observable identity, keep himself above all pollution, above every thought that does not heighten his spiritual awareness, every feeling that does not quicken the fervour of his ardent devotional heart, and the other well-fed and apparently prosperous Brahmin wearing the credentials of his birth all over his body, showing his superiority to the human race not in the wealth of intuitive knowledge he commands, not in the strength and purity of soul he is expected to demonstrate, not in the pains he is required to take in order he may know the Brahman, but in the arrogance of his manner, in the disdain and lofty contempt he readily pours, overtly and covertly, on everyone not belonging by the accidents of birth to the high caste that is his, in the boundless capacity he has for snubbing others as unfortunate, in the snobbery that escapes him at every turn, and in a self-absorption in the admiration of the sonorous music Sanskrit permits his voice and his intonation make, in reducing the simple, effortless and spontaneous gestures of mystic experience, into spectacular

and fantastic manual manipulations, the frightful medicine man and the medicine-denouncing, God-intoxicated, Sadhu who heals the diseased instantly with nothing more than a pinch of ashes, the low-caste or out-caste devotee ringing in and ringing out the very Presence of the Divine Being, conjuring up in airy nothing exquisite Forms of the Divine Beloved,—all these are Hindus, the real Hindus, the genuine Hindus, and, whether regressing or progressing, each has an individual road, a unique path, a special way, for arriving at the Divine Reality, at the End of all Existence which is also the Beginning of all Existence....all these are Hindus, living within a single family, or a single community, or a single province, or a single country, and sharing a single fold of Faith, Hinduism, the argus-eyed, million-bodied, myriad-minded, religion, the cosmic religion, the all-embracing religion, the religion which, if it is argued to be no virtual or actual parent of all the existing religions of the world, has, at least within its being, every type of ritualistic or non-ritualistic, emotional or intellectualistic, idol-worshipping or idol-less, monotheistic or polytheistic, seeker.... ....This Hinduism, in all its fundamentals, Sivananda has presented to all the world in general, and to the Stanford University students in particular.

The second form of Yoga is the Karma Yoga—Karma meaning work or action. The greatest emphasis is the scrutinizing of one's motives—to destroy all selfish motives (this stress can be paralleled to Kant's emphasis on motives.) The second important idea stressed is that one must not work with the idea of fruits in return for one's actions, for if one does expect a reward in return, then one is not acting in the spirit of Karma Yoga. There is also the danger that if one's actions gain a great deal of fame, then pride and egoism is often the outcome. The third idea stressed is that there is no distinction between menial and respectable work—it is not the work itself that is the most important thing but rather the attitude of the person doing the work. Mahatma Gandhi illustrated this principle when he refused to let anyone do his menial tasks for him—for he believed that any action could be done in the spirit of Karma Yoga. Thus one can become as magnanimous a soul as Buddha if he applies himself to selfless service with the right mental attitude.

The third type of Yoga discussed is Raja Yoga. The emphasis is upon the development of will-power and the control

over mind. The Raja Yoga has a cosmic picture of the universe. The Raja Yogi thinks of the mind as divided into two parts—the spiritual mind and the desire mind. The desire mind is closely connected with the emotions. Emotion is a motive power, yet one must learn not to become a victim to his emotions—one must purify his emotions.

The desire mind produces fluctuation, duality, a concentration upon worldly objects, and thus, spinning one in the ever-circling wheel of Samsara. It is when the ever-restless mind becomes quiescent that desires get banished—one must have his mind filled with 'super-intuitional knowledge' beyond the reach of intellect and thus Divine Wisdom will flow into the mind. When the Yogi reaches the highest stage of meditation and is separated from the Maya, he then reaches Samadhi, and then there are no seeds for rebirth.

The secret alike of the inner nature of man, and the inner constitution of the universe, lies locked up in the human psyche, of which the outer conscious mind is but a small formation, a feeble reed vibrant without, because of the seething energies beneath. An entire applied psychology of, and several spiritual techniques

for, the conscious manipulation of the depths, and the full manifestation of the divine potentialities, of the psyche, with their immediate and practical results for a plenitude of Self-realization, can be easily constructed from the rich material found furnished in those works of Sivananda that make it their central objective to expound Yoga in all its aspects.

The second type of discussion of the mind conceived by the Raja Yogi is that division between the conscious and the subconscious levels. The first takes up only ten per cent of the mind's activity whereas the latter takes up nineteen per cent of the thought-processes. This subconscious mind is called the *Chitta*. The mind consists of thoughts and the mind becomes that on which it dwells. Because the subconscious is active, one must not for instance, retain bad impressions or evil thoughts about a person—as the mind will then be warped and distorted. It is only when one strives for Self-realization, for the Atman, that both the conscious and the subconscious will become detached from worldly thoughts and pleasures—and will become that on which it dwells, i.e., Atman.

The third concept of the mind is that there is one all-embracing universal mind—the Brahman of which each individual mind is a fragment. The fourth kind of Yoga mentioned was the Jnana Yoga which stresses complete renunciation. The aim is the annihilation of the little 'I' and the obtaining of the knowledge of the Self. The Atman is "Existence, Bliss, Absolute", and the body idea must disappear.

The India that touched by the exalted patterns and spirit of its life, the Heart of Reality, will recognise no Evil, and when compelled by some circumstance to do so, will recognise it as nothing more than a fleeting phenomenon subsisting momentarily on the charity of Minds in Ignorance, willless minds lead away by forces that belong to blindness, to Ignorance, to the wild energies released by Avidya, the forces of human nature, of animal nature, of passion, anger, hatred, greed. The Indian mind knows that Evil has no ground for existence apart from the one which man in his limitations grants it, and that it disappears with the disappearance of limitations in man, as a necessity of his inner spiritual evolution, under the pressures of the growing Spirit within him. A restricted love, a limited knowledge, a life ruled by narrowness

bring into being causes and conditions that make for evil; where love is all-embracing, knowledge all-full, the light of life all-encompassing, there can be no evil; where there comes into operation the powers of self-restraint, of self-expansion in self-knowledge, in the knowledge of the self-sufficient, self-contained, self-luminous, Being within oneself, there one finds no Evil, and delights constantly in the sight of the Divine everywhere....Philosophies and theologies of the West which lack the vision with which India sweeps all Existence and all Reality, blunder into erecting the passing phenomenon of evil into a self-subsistent reality, make it assume a formidable character, speak of its rootedness in the very constitution of the consciousness of Man, allow it to overpower the will of man.

Good and evil are interdependent (in almost the same way as the pain and pleasure relationship. Both of these, good and evil, are mental creations of man—but the Brahman is above good and evil. This idea is also expressed in most of the literature from the East. This world consists of diversity, of restlessness and discord, but unity is Brahman—all is OM—where there is eternal life, harmony and supreme peace. Sivananda discusses Ha-

tha Yoga, and some of the 84 positions or Asanas, and likewise discusses the stages of Pranayama, Dharana and Dhyana and Samadhi. Sivananda says that Samadhi is not "Nothingness" but rather is the full knowledge of the Self—"the State of absolute awareness."

It redounds greatly to the credit of Ellen Miller to have made so thorough a study of Sivananda's work on Yoga in daily life, and, unawares, as a proof of it, given us a very helpful, detailed, 'scholarly', presentation of the leading themes of the work at issue. She brings to her studies her native habits of reflection, a spirit of comparison, a perception of the nature, the quality, the merits of ideas howsoever, and wherever, presented, an unbiassed opinion, and has a mind stored by a wide-ranging reading that permits her a ready association in ideas with which only scholarship can claim to be familiar.

Sivananda's book is written in a very comprehensible language and the book would help the 'layman' to discount his prejudicial and preconceived ideas of that 'mysterious Yoga'—and realise the merits

many of the ideas being needed to be stressed in the West—where doctrine and practice have, in many ways, obscured the true and basic ideas of religion.

—*Ellen Miller.*

On page thirty-nine and two hundred we are led by our own reflective thought to find inlaid in the instructive review of Richard is the concealed fact that this Saint of the world, by virtue of the merits of the deeds of his life which are also the words of his voice, is an unobtrusive, illuminating, inspiring, serviceful, ever invited Priest of everyman on earth. From a literary point of view, the compelling charms brought into a self-maintaining operation, by the Person of Sivananda as a universal Man, as a Mind anchored in self-announcing Enlightenment, a Soul stationed in, and casting its spell from, the Self of the self of each man, constrain Richard relax his critical attitude towards Sivananda Literature, into an active intellectual appreciation of the all-inclusive and exalted spirit and trends of Sivananda's written words. How great a value would we not willingly, or be persuaded to, assign to this literature of Sivananda a study of which brings us incalculably more

benefits than the study of the kind of literature which Cicero commended as the one that nourishes youth, entertains old age, adorns prosperity, solaces adversity, is delightful at home, and unobtrusive abroad!

Chapter Forty-three

Sivananda and Diana Dairs

Though of a single genre, mystics grade themselves into several groups. Some mystics differ from others in the degree of intensity, or the extent of integrality, their experience, individually attains. Some mystics there are that plunge their hearts in God-intoxicated Love, some have their inner audience perpetually attuned to the celestial music their own awakened soul makes, some cover by an all-absorbing experience all the world and all humanity with the Godhead they cherish, enshrine and live in, some render their entire body into a rarefied and exquisite piece of flesh vibrant with the ecstasies of the Divine, some rave in divine madness, revel in divine delight, and talk to themselves incoherently, symbolically, metaphorically, figuratively, allegorically, some breathe their lives into a grand Mood of transcendence, some make their Mind the centre of infinite intelligence, and yet others there are that obscure by their greatness, and embrace in their endowment, all these types of mystics. What kind of a mystic is Sivananda, we would know by winnowing such passages from his literature which reflect most the nature of

his mystic experience and attainments.

Diana Dairs sees in Sivananda Literature the institution of marriage acquire a high dignity, dyed in its appropriate colours, invested with a sanctity possible for the irresistible personality of the Indian saint, and given a direction towards unlimited freedom in the delight of existence, in the awareness of conscious being, characteristic of the Indian sage. That is typical of Sivananda or of any other sage of his stature, who had had his heart re-enact in itself all the experiences of the Upanishadic seers, to perceive in the capacity of self-giving and self-effacement ingrained in feminine nature, a virtue that when developed along the lines of its genius, aids the woman hold the reins of man, rule all mankind, and govern the very Heart of the Godhead.... Softness is no weakness when for all its apparent feebleness it steadily wears out granite; submission is no meanness, when it enslaves beyond self-recovery the heart, mind, soul, will, action, and the whole being of the ruler....Mystics who indulge in a different kind of marriage, the marriage of the soul with the Supreme, and exhaust the gamut of love-play in their own exalted spiritual Emotion, in their own high-ascending and endlessly expanding feeling, are not, at least in India, opposed to marriage on earth,

rather they are particularly equipped to draw out from the institution of human marriage the soul of sanctity that lies deep down in it, though it lies beyond the reach of man given over to animal instincts and practices; they display all the gifts that bring to it a great mood, just the mood, a transforming emotion, the right emotion, an elevating influence, the most required influence, an uplifted purpose that engages every energy, that harnesses the force in every energy brought into manifest play in man-woman relationship, towards that Goal Beyond which being here makes life an ecstasy, a paradise though bought by an unusual art of living, the art of living by continued self-sacrifice, by the disciplines of restraint, by the play on the face of an unfading cheer, by the expressions of heart of boundless love, by patience and endurance that seat themselves in the will, by high accomplishments that result from the exercises of thought and hand, by the wisdom such as is found in Sivananda Literature.

SIVANANDA has given some good advice on marriage. He spoke of it as being the union of two souls and told both partners to do good and be good, be righteous, give generously, and so on. It is the wife's position to submit to her husband at all

times. There was a long conversation between the two men the essence of which is that the goal of life is to seek Liberation.

—*Diana Dairs.*

How does a great Man such as Sivananda grow into the greatness he represents to others except by commanding deepest insights into the realities of life, the broad perspectives, penetrating perceptions, ideas that live into the lives of men and sublimate them, views that spread light and make for human happiness and development, thoughts that keep the mind of mankind above all pettiness and trives and turmoil, and turn it towards objects that evoke creative activity and nourish the soul....? Let Gareth Houk speak of the nature of perceptions Sivananda records on his mythical world-tour.

THE main story in this pamphlet concerned with a mythical trip Sivananda took around the world to bring his message to all, and in some places to check upon the work of the Vedanta Societies. At each stop, on his mythical world tour, he brings forth a lesson which is part of the essen-

tial message of the Self, which he has been trying to get across. He states that education is a marvellous thing, but only if given along proper lines. A person must realise his true Self or the nature of the purpose implicit in his life, before education can be valuable. He teaches that Yoga has much to offer to the world, because it can bring a person's true Self out into the open, not, of course, to himself because he won't be aware or conscious of it.

The essential message Sivananda tries to put across is that any person who is spiritually inclined must do his best to realise this inner Self. It is what lies behind his appearances, his actions, and his existence. Only by definite realization can he see this true Self which cannot be described. What Sivananda is mainly trying to do is to tell people that they have the ability to realise this Self, and to urge them try their utmost to attain it. The message of the whole Yoga Vedanta Movement is that a realization of the Brahman is possible and that it is necessary to any action that would be wisely done. Sivananda shows an amazing perception of the attitudes of each country he visits, and, therefore, we find him a very

learned man. The fact that he sees Russia as interested in weapons, and art is important because we in the United States wish to see in Russia, only that military aspect. India, a neutralist country, sees the whole picture where we unfortunately do not. This has very little to do with comparative religion but it shows how intermixed the religion and government of a country usually are; especially in India.

—*Gareth Houk.*

Chapter Forty-four

Sivananda and Donald Davis

The point that should deserve a great consideration at the hands of those that grant themselves the privilege of constituting themselves into critics, lies in the simple fact that to the phenomenon of Jesus the Christ the Indian mind is enabled by its culture in the Yoga of Devotion, and by an inheritance of a characteristic spiritual nature, to take a most beneficial emotional awareness appropriate to the soul of all saintliness the very Name of Jesus stands for, such large perspectives as are in keeping with the standards that dictate the right reading of the eminence of the world's immortal Teacher.... Elsewhere we would give ourselves the benefit of pursuing this point in all its dimensions.

Need it be stressed that the most notable of the distinguishing features of a great Man like Sivananda, that leaves upon us a wholesome and lasting impact, is his capacity to invest everything he touches with a strange greatness, with a great meaning, with a great value....We need to give ourselves the delight of observing the manner by which the teachings of Jesus

the Christ, obtain their full significance, their total value, their native grandeur. Here we would skip over just one or two facets of Sivananda's interpretation of the teachings of Jesus the Christ. 'The doctrine of Christ is the system of the supreme Consciousness, which is the highest Reality, and it implies the relative laws of what are termed here forms of righteousness. That is said to be righteous which tends to the conscious recognition of the Eternal Divine Presence. Hence righteousness consists more in spirit than in letter, in inward feeling than outward form, in psychological and spiritual attitude rather than ritualistic and traditional routine. And Christ came to bear witness to this righteousness underlying the law of the Truth. In essence, this righteousness consists in renunciation of appearances and affirmation of Reality. And all the stages that lead to this righteousness, also are characterised by righteousness. The whole Christ's teachings abound in this twofold revelation of the meaning of life. In the terminology of the system of Indian Yoga, these constitute Vairagya and Abhyasa. In fact, all saints have said only this, that phenomena have to be renounced, that the Imperishable Spirit should be contemplated upon and realized. Christ gives expression to these truths in various ways in his life and in his precepts. "What is a man profited, if he

shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" And yet this is what most men of the world do not care to think.. Search for outward things in which man seems to be continuously engaged is really the denial of the independence and dignity of the Self, and the assertion of the unreal tantalizing presentations to the senses. It is teaching of Christ that man shall not live by bread alone, but by the Spirit within. But adherence to the righteousness of the Spirit means self-abnegation, an abandonment of the external temptations. Not only this; it implies the possession of a power of enduring all persecutions from the opposing forces of the lower nature. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." He that gains blessedness in the realm of Spirit, casts aside the corresponding negativity in the region of darkness. Suffering in this world is the price to be paid for the supreme fulfilment in the Consciousness of the Divine. Suffering cannot be avoided for man as long as he is an element of the relative universe. And this suffering should be accompanied by great tolerance; even positive evil should not evoke our propensity to retaliation. "Resist not evil" is a shining gem adorning

the garland of the teachings of Chrits. Perhaps it sums up the major teaching concerning spiritual life, that evil is the product of erroneous perception and that correct vision of things affirms absoluteness of the pure Spirit. All resistance is an affirmation of ego, however much it may be justified by false logic and prejudiced understanding. It may be that some forms of egoism are considered harmless in that they are supposed to tend to or even express righteousness, and sometimes indispensable. It is so as an apology for true righteousness; but it does not require much thinking to discover that it is a sanction to the weaker side of human nature and that the greatest heroism of spirit is manifest in unlimited tolerance. No retaliation can equal in its effects the majesty of endurance par excellence. 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you;" "for if ye love them which love you what reward have ye?" "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father whic art in heaven is perfect." It is not only tolerance and non-retaliation that are required of us but positive love towards all. This love is expressed both in mind and body. A feeling of love for all based on the omnipresence and supremacy of God, characterise the psychic being. And in external life, love takes the form of service.

Service should be done not to win the gratitude of the person served or to enjoy the good-will and praise of the public but to purify the inner nature and fulfil the law of God. Hence Christ says: "Take head that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them....when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right doeth....and thy Father which seeth in secret, Himself shall reward thee openly."

When it is Sivananda that presents Jesus, we have all the essential characteristics of the Christ, in all their significance, impress themselves upon our minds, and when it is Logan, a Stanford University scholar that comes to examine this presentation, we have in the examiner an advocate of the identity Sivananda and Jesus the Christ share in the teaching they give. Perhaps the reader would say that Logan is indeed such an advocate only by the very manner of his interpretation of the perspectives in which Jesus Christ stands in the proximity of Sivananda, and in the printed pages of Sivananda Literature.

DIFFICULT it is, for a Westerner, no matter how meagre his religious education, to read Swami Sivananda's book without

at the same time finding it bring into a new light some of the teachings of Jesus the Christ, and raise in us the question, "Aren't Sivananda and the Christ speaking of the same thing?"

Jesus and Sivananda stress not mere rationality but more and more of faith, a realization of Truth by immediate awareness rather than by objective knowledge. The Hebrew faith which is the background for the teaching of Jesus, taught that all men were created in the image of God, which isn't of course, to say that we are all little gods, but rather that something of the Divine Being is found reflected in us. Sivananda points out, "Thou art divine. Live upon it. Feel and realise thy divine Nature."

When Sivananda says, "It is bondage when you are attached to anything of this world, and liberation when you identify yourself with the pure, immortal Atman," one wonders if this isn't what Christ intended when he said, "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hatt the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and Mammon." And when the Pharsees demanded of Jesus when

the Kingdom of God would come, he replied, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, 'Lo here! or Lo there!' for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you," might he not have been referring to the Yogin's precious Atman?

Certainly from all we know of Jesus as a man, his ways were such as those described by Sivananda, with regard to a Jivanmukta. He was a celibate, moderate in all things and one who controlled his mind as well as his body. His cardinal teaching of love of God corresponds to Sivananda's emphasis on Bhakti Yoga—love for love's sake.

Portrayed in the Sivananda Literature are these salient features, these leading characteristics, these higher significances of the teachings Jesus the Christ gave to all lovers of God: 'We do charity not to glory on earth, but to glory in God. A desire to do service and charity in public implies a non-belief in the absolute reality of God and a faith in the phenomenal universe. It is this false faith in things that perish that constitutes real sin. The power, the inner strength that is required to overcome

the temptation to yield the urge to seek pleasure in external things is to be acquired from the Eternal Foot of God. One has only to seek it sincerely and one shall have it. Intense aspiration for the realization of the Eternal Spirit is like a fire which shall burn up all extraneous thoughts and lift the aspirant above the mire of sense-experience. The fault lies in man who does not sincerely seek it, for he seems to be satisfied with the constricted vision and the painful life to which he is tethered by ignorance of higher truths and values. A surrender of personality engendered by deep devotion to the Eternal shall pull out the bolt of the ego closing the door of the heart, and let in the flood of the blissful consciousness of perfection and power from above. But, for this the condition is seeking—aspiring. "Ask, and it shall be given to you; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Christ calls the path of God 'the strait gate'. The way to the knowledge and experience of God is distressful, abounding in difficulties. One may say that it is even painful, distasteful, and to some, fearful. Many turn away from it, after making the preliminary attempts to tread it. Fear, disgust, doubt and despair debar the aspirants from entering 'the strait gate'. Indian teachers call this 'the pathless path', the bird's path,' 'the path of the fish,' etc., meaning that the

way to God is mysterious hard to understand and untraceable like the path of birds in the air, or of aquatic animals in water. They call it 'the pathless path', because it is not a 'path' but a state of consciousness; it is not situate in space, which is the accepted idea of path, but an internal tranfiguration of one's entire being. Enter ye in at the strait gate; for, wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." It is easy to flow with the current of a river but hard to swim against it. To carry out the commands of the lower instincts is pleasant, for man generally lives in agreement with them; but to conquer them and listen to the silent voice of the Spirit is a task demanding extraordinary courage and understanding. It is quite likely that the aspirant may experience at a certain stage of his spiritual practices a natural desertion of himself by other persons and things. This is not experienced at all times, but only at a particular situation in which the seeker finds himself while searching for Reality. While the earth is cut from under the feet, and the heavens have not yet lent enough support, the seeker finds himself in a peculiar predicament where consciousness of the pain of one's

separation from objects of individual satisfaction supervenes. At this stage the Light of God appears to be eclipsed and the natural forces are at war with the seeker. There is an apparent suppression of Truth by the undivine forces before it finally overthrows them and reveals itself in glorious triumph. Christ, in his life of suffering symbolizes this position of the aspiring soul, and says: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head." When God's grace descends on man, he is first stripped of all his possessions and cut off from the centres of his enjoyment. Christ demonstrates this to mankind in his life of 'symbolic suffering'."

Sivananda says, "Live in the world, but be not worldly-minded. He who, living in the midst of the temptations of this world, attains perfection is a true hero indeed." With this as a criterion for a Jivanmukta, would it not include Jesus as a great Guru seeking to teach his followers to find what the Indian calls "the Atman which is Brahman"?

—*Logan.*

Sivananda continues his delineation of the high significances of the lofty message delivered

by the Light of the world of human aspiration, born twenty centuries ago and yet growing stronger.

'The grandest peak of his teaching is the gospel of self-surrender. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me; for whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." The process of spiritual attainment is one of 'dying to live'. The complete negation of personality is the same as the attainment of the Impersonal Absolute. The cross of relative suffering and pain everyone has to take up, for the sake of the supreme peace that passeth all understanding. Love of life is the strong iron chain binding the soul to bodily life and misery, by which it loses the real life which is of the Higher Spirit. But he who aspires for the Supreme Blessedness of the Spirit shall have to cast aside the life of the flesh here on earth and surrender himself to the Supreme. Surrender is the fruit of faith. Faith can work wonders. 'If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain 'Remove hence to yonder place', and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Much discussion has been carried on in regard to the relation between self-effort and predetermination. But Christ declares emphatically that nothing can happen

of God. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." Man is bound not because he puts forth effort in some direction, but because he thinks and also feels that it is his separated individuality that exercises the efforts, not knowing that he cannot lift a straw without the Divine Will. The moment effort is realized to be a single phase of the Spirit, effort becomes not a force directed to any individualized end but a cosmic movement, a process of the universe within itself in relation to the whole of itself, and not merely to one of its parts. In the consciousness of this universal nature of all actions and thoughts does consist the liberation of the individual. The teachings of Jesus offer solutions to all problems of life. Metaphysical, ethical, social, and individual relations, commonweal, national good, and all the values of life, are finally centred in the nature of God-consciousness; only then will the true worth of a thing be known. But other forms of judgment arise from mistake and lead to mistake. "Judge not, that ye be not judged." For, in the manner in which we behave towards things shall they and shall God's Law behave with us. "All things whatsoever ye

without the will of God. And so even the so-called self-effort should form part of the Will would that men should do to you, do you even so to them; for this is the law of the prophets." The incarnation of Christ has its mission in revealing to the world the greatness of God, the glory of Truth, the worthlessness of things mundane which are estranged from God who is Truth, the necessity of surrender, and the importance of renunciation and fortitude.'

Born into the noblest Faith that Christianity is, and yet into a not easily welcome and justifiable doctrines of original sin and salvation only for the Christian soul, Marylyn Marshall learns from Sivananda Literature the lesson of God as everything, that sin dies a natural death, purity gains a natural victory and insistently demands its original infinitude in the Kingdom of God within the heart of man, and that salvation is for all, for all.

FROM Sivananda I derived the lesson that God is everything. God comes to one in many forms at all times; God is everywhere; God is the essence of all things. It is necessary to start early in Yoga practices and in the search for the Self. There is no need to cry over spilt milk. Salva-

tion is possible for all.

—*Marylyn Marshall*

The irradiance of the Upanishadic spirit from the mind of Sivananda gains hereunder Pollak's attention. The estimate he makes of this aspect of Sivananda Literature is comparative and constructive. A new trend is noted in the thought of Sivananda; but the critics and their followers would feel glad to take pains and find that this trend is pre-existent in the Upanishads themselves, and its presence therein cannot be implicitly denied for the sake of granting originality either to Sri Aurobindo or to Sivananda, the two heirs to the matchless traditions and treasures of India, voicing differently, but conveying the same meaning, the same values, the identical verities.

SIVANANDA'S pamphlet contained much of the Hindu philosophy that is found in on the merit and value of meditation and finding of the Atman. I would say, however, that Sivananda's ideas more closely parallel those of Sri Auroindo than those of the Upanishads. The oject of finding the Atman and uniting with thte Brahman

is not to escape life, but to elevate life, to bring on the spiritual age. Sivananda stresses that 'meditation on the Atman means meditation on Virtue'; and that one must live a righteous life of true brotherhood, and so on. The pamphlet contained also a poem urging Indian senators to legislate wisely.

—Pollak.

Donnald Danis derives from Sivananda Literature such moral lessons that are insubstance and in import typically Christian.

SIVANANDA'S pamphlet taught me several things. First, I learned a simple method of Pranayama which anyone could follow at any time. Second, I learned a moral from the Parable of the Feast. In this story, a beggar comes to the house of a rich man in his town and asks for food. The rich man invites him to a banquet. This is not an ordinary banquet however. It is imaginary. There actually was no food—the rich man began pretending to eat. The beggar thought he had better follow along and not complain. Friendly, the rich man tells the beggar that he was just testing him and the real food comes in to be served. The moral is that one

should not be greedy and that one should be patient and he will achieve more. If the beggar had complained he probably would have got nothing. If he had been impatient, he would not have got anything.

—*Donnald W. Danis.*

In a spirit of touching reverence for the Founder of the Christian Faith, Sivananda enumerates the reasons that account for his irresistible preference for a particular chapter in the Bible.

ONE of my favourite chapters in the Bible is in the First Epistle of Paul, the Apostle, the Corinthians, which I quote below, giving my reasons for liking it.

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries ,and all knowledge; and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor and though I give my body to be

burned and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemingly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face, now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

I love this chapter very much, because it is not only poetic and beautiful, but seems to me to portray such a perefct picture of the qualities of our Lord Jesus Christ; and, also, it contains a promise.

In the opening sentences, we are told of the utter uselessness of all other spiritual qualifications, unless we possess the one and the most redeeming quality of charity. Charity covers a wide range of virtues—selflessness, surrender of egoism, fellowship, amity, forgiveness, compassion and, above all, pure love. We are told that a person of charity must be patient, humble, unselfish, honest, constant, kind, and absolutely pure. And then, finally, we are given a promise, a promise that we shall eventually be brought "face to face" with our Lord.

The two salient virtues which stand out most clearly in my mind when I read this passage, are those of kindness and purity. And perhaps next to these I would put constancy; the constancy of love, the love that never fails. Love is kind. To be loving we must be kind. Surely kindness is of the very essence of love. To be kind is to be compassionate and forgiving; to

be kind is to try not to hurt others' feel-
ings; to be kind is to be gentle and sweet;
to be kind is to be sympathetic and under-
standing and ready to help a friend in
need. It is not only the positive things
we do and say and think that constitute
kindness, but it is often the things we do
not do or say or think. How often we can
be kind by not passing on that unkind re-
mark we hear about a friend, or y not
saying that thoughtless and tactless world
that is on the tip of our tongue.

And, then, we have purity. Charity
"thinketh no evil." What absolute purity,
to think no evil at all, not even a single
evil thought; how divinely pure, and yet
this was indeed the blessed state of our
Lord Jesus Christ. We are told to love
the Lord our God with all our heart and
all our soul, through all our days; and to
do this, we should not only act in a pure
way, but we must have pure thoughts
always. We must attribute nothing but
the best motives to other people; our
every thought must be holy and unselfish
and in accordance with God's will. What
a glorious ideal!

And, then, we are told of the constan-
cy—"charity never faileth." Charity never

lets you down; he who truly loves you, never lets you down, and if we love others, we should never let them down. Our Lord's love for us was constant and never failed us, and his love is still constant and with us today. It is the one thing we can completely rely upon. And so we see that true love is loyal, devoted, constant, and never fails.

Finally, we come to the promise. First we are told we must have faith; we must believe; next we must have hope, and, finally, we have a promise. Here is tht assurance of complete fulfilment of that for which we hope. "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face." All our doubts will be cleared, all the things we do not understand will be made plain to us, all the clouds of darkness will be swept away; there will be no more separation from God but all will be absolute unity and clarity, for then we shall be "face to face".

And so, to sum up, I love this thirteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Corinthians, not only because of its poetic beauty, and the glory of the promise in the closing verse, but I love it for the beautiful

picture I see portrayed of our Lord Jesus Christ as epitomized in charity and love, tht essential qualities of which, are to me, those of constancy, purity and kindness.

CHRISTIANITY is not an arm-chair religion; in fact, no religion can afford to recline on the arm-chair if it is to live. Christianity is a living religion, a religion which is dynamic and vibrant. So long as there is one pious and devout follower of Christ, Christianity would live; there was only one Lord Jesus, who is today adored by millions all over the world. Even today Jesus lives in our hearts, because in the worst crises, in the greatest of temptations, he triumphed, holding aloft by his own life and actions the glory of truth and righteousness. He was not a speculative philosopher, but a living God. Unless this living God is worshipped in a living manner by living His life in our own life, all the speculations of philosophy will vanish into the thin air.

Trials and temptations come but to be overcome by the brave. Tests and trying situations are spiritual vitamin tablets. They come to strengthen your mind and to purify your heart. They are, as it were, the wise men that discover Jesus in you.

To succumb to these trials is weakness. To fast, to pray, to discriminate, and to overcome those obstacles with the help of the Grace of the Lord is spiritual heroism. When the victory is achieved, to feel, to realise and to proclaim that it was the Lord's Grace that enabled you to attain victory is real meekness. Meekness is virtue; weakness is sin. This lesson we should learn from the life of Lord Jesus.

—*Sivananda.*



Will humanity ever dispense with all need for the light and guidance and grace from Christ?—That is impossible, inconceivable, so long as man is man and there gnaws at his heart a sense of the state of imperfection in which his self-conscious intelligence aids him, like a good mentor, find himself, so long as man has a large impulse, a broad idea, a notion of true progress, a susceptibility to ideals, a sensitiveness to what the best in him senses and feels as the Truth, the Beautiful, the Ideal.... —SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

The portrait on the reverse is of our Lord Jesus, and the one facing page twenty-one and three hundred is of that universal Person, Swami Sivananda, universally adored and loved for his deeds of Light and Love, for his exemplary life laid in the rhyme-schemes, never of a high pontifical authority, but of simple, dynamic, extensive spiritual ministry, of a wise, tender, compassionate Divinity.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

Chapter Forty-five

Sivananda and Anne Alexander

No other immortal religious genius of the world had ever exerted so great a chastening and sublimating influence upon the natural passions of human nature, around the world, through the centuries, as Jesus, and despite the obscuration by scholasticism, on the one hand, and unrestrained sentimentalization by pious imagination, on the other, of the attractive power of the character of Jesus, the Indian mind had always carrried to the unique phenomenon of Jesus an attitude of noetic awe and a mood surcharged with such intense reverence as it ever gave to any of the greatest Gods in the Hindu pantheon.... As we proceed it shall be our pleasure to explore the nature of the excellences the heart of India finds disclosed in the personality of Jesus.

Hard-boiled rationalists have in vain attempted to weave away into myth and legend the life of the Man of Nazareth; such rationalists who swear by their logic will be spared their energies if only they bear in memory that Jesus is a Name that is rooted in the very soul of the world of which it has distinguished itself, for

ever, as the Light, that Jesus is a Word bound up with the very vitals of the deep-seated and noblest affections of the human heart, that Jesus will remain for the eternal mankind, a Power that strikes most responsive chords in every Heaven-ward sentiment, a Presence constantly felt, a Reality showing itself in the miracles it works hourly in the lives of hundreds, in the lives of the unnumbered and the unknown.... Sivananda approaches Jesus not as the transcendent revolutionary that He is, but as the physician to the soul of humanity he will always be.

THE vital importance and the deep significance of Jesus and His immortal teachings will become clear to us only when we consider who Jesus was and how He came into being. Jesus was not an ordinary human being. He was the Divine Power and Love, incarnated upon this globe for a special divine purpose. His advent was in the nature of a fulfilment of the Divine Plan for this world-process. This will be seen from the very manner of His birth and its background. Even before He illumined this terrestrial globe by the radiance of His Divine Presence, His advent was proclaimed and preached and broadcast by

a Chosen Man of God, whom we know as John the Baptist.

As we consider the sublime life of the Saviour, one of the very first important spiritual truths revealed to us comes through one of the most moving incidents recorded in the Gospel. The compassionate Lord moving through the city street comes suddenly upon an angry crowd. He sees that they are all taken wrathful with a woman who was caught in the act of sin, and were about to punish her with death. At the approach of the Saviour, the hapless woman takes shelter at His feet, shedding tears of remorse. Jesus turns with His serene and yet compelling countenance upon the angry crowd and challenges them to lift a hand against this woman, saying, "Let him among you who is without sin cast the first stone." There is silence. All angry voices die out. Fear enters the heart of the multitude. Dropping the stones and sticks, the crowd disappears. Jesus is left alone with the repentant sinner at His feet. He raises her up and sends her away saying "Go and sin no more." In these few words He reveals to us the great Law of the Spiritual Realm, i.e., that the soul which repents sincerely gets absolved of

all sins and receives the blessings of the Divine Compassion. O man! Learn ye that if you will aspire for the true Grace, you have but to turn away from your evil ways and resolve that you will "sin no more."

Should you but take this step of turning away from the darkness of evil in life, and step towards the light of a pure and divine life, then indeed you do open yourself up for the ingress of the Lord's blessings. But if these blessings are to enter into your being and attain their fullness and bear fruit in the form of rich spiritual experience, then you must prepare your heart for their right and proper reception, just as a farmer prepares the soil fully for the seeds to germinate and develop into a rich harvest.

What important part the right and proper receptivity of the seeker plays in the progress of spiritual life is brought out in a beautiful parable by Jesus. One warm, sultry day in Copernaum the Lord has spent a busy forenoon, preaching, teaching, healing, consoling, inspiring and instructing vast multitudes that had thronged around Him towards evening, He walks upon the shore of the lake Galilee. There, too, the multitudes follow. They press upon

Him and Jesus gets into a boat and rowing a few yards away from the shore anchors upon the water. From there He turns upon the eager gathering. In sweet accents His loving words come to them.

He tells them how a farmer scatters the seeds for the field, which is by the roadside. There is a strong breeze. Some of the seeds are blown away and fall by the roadside, where birds pick them up and they are lost. Some seeds fall upon dry, hard rocks. There they have no soil to take root in. They wither up in the sun and die. Yet others fall upon good soil, but being in the midst of thorns and brambles, though the seeds sprout up and the young seedlings grow into small plants, they are choked by thorns and brambles, and finally die. And lastly, those seeds that have fallen into good soil grow, develop, flourish and turn into a rich harvest.

Nowhere does Sivananda offer grounds for a charge that he is seeking to unearth a supposed symbolism from the life of Jesus; rather, a rich symbolism is self-articulate in the patterns of living the life-style of Jesus projected; if Jesus lived from, and layed the whole spirit of his

life, in the Light of the Kingdom of God within, lived by a grand idea, a great sentiment, a greater sacrifice, a goodness that transcends anything conceivable in human nature at its noblest and best, then that idea, that sentiment, that sacrifice, that goodness is itself the inexhaustible symbolism manifest in the works, words, widom of the life of Jesus, and it is these that concern Sivananda even as they find their illustrious expressions in his own life.

Even so, though the Lord in His Loving Mercy is scattering abroad the precious seeds of spiritual truths that are to bear a harvest of supreme bliss, yet unfortunately, all do not benefit fully out of them. Some hearts are so much constantly preyed upon by desires and earthly passions (birds) that the blessings of the Lord are not allowed to remain there at all. Some hearts are so totally dry, being devoid of faith and devotion, that in them spiritual truths wither and perish, even as the seeds fallen upon rocks do. In some other good natures, seeds of spiritual life take root and start to grow, but alas, the harsh thorns of bad company, worldly association and impure and undivine environment,

choke the young spiritual plant and destroy it.

It is only the fortunate ones, the sincere and earnest seekers, who have rendered themselves eminently receptive to all spiritual influences and who have prepared their hearts fully by prayer, spiritual discipline, selfless service, that reap the maximum benefit from the blessings that are ever being conferred by the Lord upon all mankind through His Divine Messengers, the saints and sages and devotees of all times and climes and through the sacred scriptures of all the great religions of the world. Therefore, O aspirant, through Sadachar and Seva, through diligent practice of Yama-Niyama, through the acquisition of Sadhana-Chatushthaya, prepare your inward being perfectly, if you wish to reap the glorious harvest of spiritual bliss.

If you are to ask why indeed should one take so much pains to receive the spiritual seeds, the reply is given through a number of connected parables. They go to explain how unparalleled and peerless indeed is the precious treasure of spiritual Realization. It is far more than all the wealth and enjoyment of entire earth put

together. For its sake, a wise man will gladly give up everything. It is like the hidden treasure suddenly uncovered by a man at the plough. Full of joy, he hides the secret until he has sold away all that he had in order to buy the particular field for himself. By this he obtains the truth which he knows to be far superior to all his petty possessions. Or, imagine a merchant seeking the finest of the pearls. Then, one day, he finds the most precious pearl he has even seen. Recognizing its worth, he sells away all his other pearls, gems and his entire business in order to buy this pearl beyond all price.

Spiritual experiences alone it is that give worth to other aspects of life. Without it the other experiences of life are as nothing. It is like a little bit of yeast which a baker puts into a large quantity of flour. This little bit leavens the whole of the flour. Then again, how does the man of awakened discrimination act in his dealing with the spiritual and the material aspects of life? He knows which is good and which is useless. Thereofre, he rejects the material and embraces the spiritual just as a

fisherman having drawn a net full of fish from the sea, keeps the good ones alone and casts away the bad ones back into the sea. The proper sense of values is revealed in this parable. You are told of your duty towards that which is worthy and that which is worthless. Know therefore the rare worth of the spiritual ideal. The seeker should be ready and willing to cast away all unspiritual things and to firmly adhere to the spiritual aim of life.

The world meted out to Jesus unmitigated suffering and persecution, and by that very act sealed his immortality, his irresistible greatness for, his compelling influence over, every age that followed the one that heralded his blessed birth.

In seeking to work out the spiritual ideal, one should be ever ready to accept all opportunities that the Lord puts before him for gathering spiritual experience. If he fails to do so, the blessings of God may be withheld from him. "Beware" says Jesus through His effective parable of the rich man and his feast. The rich man prepared a great and delicious feast and sent his servants to bring his friends to dine. But they all made excuses for not coming.

Each one had some personal preoccupation or other—one his newly bought land, another his oxen, a third his young wife, and so on. When the rich man heard these excuses, he was displeased. "Go into the city-streets," he ordered his servants, "and bring in the poor, the crippled and the blind." When there was yet room, he ordered, "Go beyond the city into the highways and the hedges and make all the outcastes and the destitutes come to the feast. Those who rejected my invitation shall never taste of my banquet." Even so, when opportunities for spiritual gain are offered, let one not commit the great blunder of rejecting them, for, later on, one will have to lament over the great gain that one deliberately bypassed and missed by one's neglect and heedlessness.

Lastly, we come to the beautiful parable of the wise and the foolish bridesmaids, through which Jesus teaches how if we wish to avail of all spiritual opportunities, we need to be most alert and ever vigilant. Out of ten bridesmaids who fell asleep while waiting for the bridegroom, five were wise and they carried spare oil for their

lamps, but five were foolish and they did not. So when they were suddenly called upon the groom's arrival, the lamps of the foolish maidens were out, but the wise ones who had kept the lamps burning bright readily went to the joyous marriage function. But the others were too late and were thus excluded from the rejoicing. So you must ever keep watch, for you never know when the auspicious hour of spiritual blessedness comes.

Again, nowhere does Sivananda expose himself to the charge that he is eager to rationalise the life of Jesus; rather, the logic of the life of Jesus is itself the greatest monolithic structure of Reason against which both rationalism and reason are but a phenomenon evacuated of all power and sense.

Thus, through all these beautiful and wise parables, the Lord Jesus taught the valuable lessons of truth, repentance, receptivity, renunciation, ready surrender and ever-alert spiritual vigilance to the seekers upon the path of Yoga and Self-realization. He taught us the great lesson of *uttishthata jagrata prapya varannibodhata*. Thus He lived and taught near-

ly twenty centuries ago. Thus the Light shone and illumined, and then entered into His Apostles through whom it later spread and enveloped the entire earth.

—*Sivananda*

The early Jewish prejudice that abhored the very idea of the possibility of Godhead incarnating Itself in Jesus and thus coming into "such close relations with the material world as are implied in the birth and crucifixion of the Son of God", would have stood corrected, had it come into contact and grown familiar with the Hindu vision that finds Godhead a thing apart from the flesh in which it incarnates itself, apart from, and unsullied by, the body it is embodied in, the body that is an inevitable heir to trials and transience on earth.

When the Lord was twelve years old, Joseph and Mary took Him to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover. Jesus was very much interested in the Temple and the discourses of the priests there. In fact, He was so much engrossed in the thoughts of God and His Divine Law, that when His parents had left the temple and were returning to Nazareth, He returned to the

temple and were returning to Nazareth, He returned to the temple and joined a group of religious teachers who were discussing religious questions. Even to these masters of philosophy, His words were astounding.

Soon Joseph and Mary discovered that Jesus was not following them! In great consternation they returned to the temple and found Him there. Mary gently chided Him for thus slipping away from them: to which the Lord replied in those wonderful mystic words: "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" The fond parents were only even more puzzled.

Exalted forms of socialism wherever manifest have their deep-laid roots in the greatness of the personality and teaching of Jesus Christ. These prophets are superhuman individuals by virtue of the fact they own a Heart as wide as the world, hold in their palm of Service and Sacrifice all mankind, and bathe everyone they gaze on with such looks that dissolve all differences between man and man, race and race, colour and colour, and even Faith and Faith, or religion and religion. Sivananda portrays Jesus as 'the prophet of spiritual socialism.'

'One of the earliest and most enlightened prophets of spiritual socialism, baptised by John while he was about thirty and preaching in the Aramaic tongue in Judea during the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Jesus Christ was first to advocate in that part of the world the necessity to shed racial and class bigotry and to identify oneself as a common member of the vast family of mankind where everyone was a child of God with equal rights and opportunities to live in peace and to seek Him. When selfishness and greed were nothing to be ashamed of, it was Jesus who emphasized the necessity of equal distribution of wealth, practical sympathy and loving considerateness for the fellowmen and the strangers alike, of abandoning vengeance and reprisal through forgiveness and charity, to love one's neighbour as one's own self for the obvious reason that there might be no disunity and disharmony, and, on the whole, to encounter evil by good, because if evil was to be met by evil there would be no end of it.'

For about fourteen years thereafter, Jesus spent His life in India and lived like a Hindu or Buddhist monk. He had a burning dispassion and the spirit of renunciation. In India he assimilated Hindu ideals and principles. Some Christians do not believe in this account of the Lord's "missing

period". They argue it is not specifically mentioned in the Bible.

In matters connected with persons who lived as far back as nearly twenty centuries ago, there is bound to be slight divergences of view. The Old Testament naturally cannot contain any reference. The New Testament consists of Gospels, etc., written by His Disciples, after He was enlightened. It is obviously futile to search for a reference about the period preceding this,—which was the period during which he travelled in India where He got initiation from sages and seers—in accounts of His actions written by people who could never have had any knowledge of His earlier days. It has been the belief of many historians that at some time during the missing period Jesus travelled in this view: and its acceptance would only strengthen the bonds of love between the East and the West, and promote goodwill between the two hemispheres, which is the Mission of the Lord.

John the Baptist, son of the priest Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth, had, in accordance with angel Gabriel's prophecy, begun to baptize people and to prepare them to receive the Light of the Lord Jesus.

Lord Jesus was now about thirty years of age, and sought John to be baptized by him on the banks of the river Jordan. John recognised Jesus' Divinity and asked: "Dost Thou come to me, when I have need to be baptized by Thee?" But the Lord had determined to set an example to mankind: spiritual illumination can be had through a Guru (Preceptor). The moment the baptism was complete, Lord Jesus saw a vision of God's spirit descending like a dove and alighting upon Him, and He heard a heavenly voice say: "Thou art my beloved son, I am well pleased with thee."

Even John the Baptist had often declared that Lord Jesus was greater than he. But look at the Lord's devotion to His Preceptor! He said: "Of those born of women there has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist." Devotion to the Guru (Preceptor) is the key that unlocks the realms divine; and even the Supreme Being, the Mass of Supreme Consciousness, when He descends upon this earth, sets a great example in Guru-Bhakti.

After the baptism, Lord Jesus restored to seclusion in the wilderness and practised extreme austerities and fasted. At the

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with the Joy of Existence, a Wisdom full of the power of the all-embracing Love, a Wisdom that is the Light of the Consciousness shining in its, and through its, own substance and moulds, a Wisdom that makes no distinction between Man and Woman but meets in both the same Heart, the throb of the same Life, the Soul of its own soul, the Self that is its own, that does not know how to distinguish between the Hindu and the Christian, differentiate the Christian from the Hindu, but that finds in both the same Lover of God, a single Person, a single object of joy, love and adoration, a Wisdom that does not know what sin is, and what Merit is, but finds Purity, total Purity, unsullied Purity in whatever it touches, on whomsoever its gaze alights, wherever its influence spreads, in all that it meets,—this is Sivananda. When such a Wisdom seeks to depict Christ, it does it in a manner wholly worthy of the superhuman eminence that mantles the aureate Person of Christ, in a way that adds colour and meaning to what appears, even to the most devout heart, less colourful and less meaningful, raises the object of its portrayal into heights of the Beauty its own bosom bears and manifests in each of its manifold self-expression, and finds in Christ not a Person, a Man, a Form, the Father of a single religion, Christianity, but a Lord of the human heart wherever awake to the God-ward thought, a Presence that quickens the best of the spiritual susceptibilities in the soul of every man, a Beauty that impresses itself by the splendour of its beneficent deeds, the immortal power of its spoken words, the illustriousness of its manifest character, as a civilizing Force, a thrilling Thing, an Agency that nurtures a Godhead in manhood, a Light that shines in the blazing noon, sees in the pitch darkness, illuminates thought, founds awareness wherever subsistent, awakens Consciousness wherever asleep, and sustains Life.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.



A Wisdom transcribing itself in words of a hundred nuance of significance, a Wisdom sporting in Delight and replete

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end of 40 days of such fasting He was hungry. Austerities and meditation had, no doubt, earned for Him divine powers to work miracles. And, the Lord did perform miracles to save people and to heal them. "Why not use those powers now, convert stones into bread, and appease your hunger," tempted Satan, the Evil One. But, Lord Jesus resolutely refused to yield to this temptation, saying: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the Mouth of God." Then, again, the temptation arose to test the miraculous powers; "Why not throw yourself from a high tower of the temple; if you are God's Son, angels shall bear Thee up," whispered Satan, the Evil One. But once again Lord Jesus brushed the temper aside, saying: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." A third temptation was placed before Him, when the Evil One took Him to the top of a high mountain, showed Him the world, and said: "All these will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me." But, will Lord Jesus, agree? No. He grew stern and rebuked: "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written in the Scriptures 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve.' " The Evil One disappeared

and the angels ministered to the Lord.

In this great incident of His Life, the Lord had not only given us three most inspiring pieces of instruction, but had also warned by his own example that psychic powers are to be considered as obstacles on his path by the true spiritual aspirant, and that even if, by His Grace, these powers do come to him, he should never even think of utilising them for his selfish ends. Even when his life was at stake, Lord Jesus would not use His miraculous powers to prevent His being crucified. All the miracles He performed during His travels were prompted by the supreme compassion of His heart which overflowed with love and mercy towards all beings. He healed the sick and even raised the dead. But what he really did was to cast out the devils from the persons whom he healed. Their past evil deeds and their hidden evil tendencies had taken the form of their physical and mental ailments. Jesus reclaimed the lost souls and restored to them their pristine purity; He obtained for them, the Lord's Mercy and Pardon. In His radiant Presence, they not only had great faith in God, but they felt a real eagerness to follow Lord Jesus and lead

a new, divine life in accordance with His instructions. It was this faith and this true repentance—repentance that was at once translated into a complete self-reformation—that drew forth from Lord Jesus, His compassionate Healing Grace.

Indeed to be a Christian is to be superlatively blessed, and in this avowal of Coleridge we are brought face to face not with a sentimental rhapsody, nor with a fanatical assertion, but with a simple fact. "I have known" declared Coleridge, in all seriousness, "what the enjoyments and advantages of this life are, and what are the more refined pleasures which learning and intellectual power can bestow; and with all the experience that more than three-score years can give, I now, on the eve of my departure, declare to you, that health is a great blessing; competence obtained by honourable industry is a great blessing; and a great blessing it is, to have kind, faithful, and loving friends and relatives; but that the greatest of all privileges, is to be indeed a Christian." But, the full meaning of being a Christian, the character of a true Christian who lives a life in perfect accord with principles of living manifest in Christ, and who derives the energies and the beauties of his personal nature directly from the divine source of

the life of Jesus, we find best portrayed in the writings of Sivananda. It would be profitable to know that the true Christian may, not unoften, have as little to do with the external signs and outward symbols of the Christian, as the unbeliever, the heathen, the non-Christian. And it is more profitable to know that there subsists a perfect identity between Sivananda's conception of a true Christian framed by such great minds as Pascal and Horace Bushnell. 'No man is so happy', wrote Pascal, 'as the real Christian; none so rational, so virtuous, so amiable. How little vanity does he feel, though he believes himself united to God! How far is he from abjectness though he ranks himself with the worms of the earth.' 'The Christian', confesses Horace Bushnell, 'needs a reminder every hour; some defeat, surprise, adversity, peril, to be agitated, mortified, beaten out of his course, so that all remains of self will be sifted out.' If Sivananda differs from these great minds, it is only in being more positive and more powerful in his portrayal of the Christian character, and in restricting himself, in all his self-expressions in teaching, exclusively to the most positive aspects of the genuine Christian life.

Jesus, after the period of His seclusion and austerities, came back to his na-

tive village, eager to impart His wisdom to his fellow-men. John the Baptist had already declared to the people that the Kingdom of God was at hand and called upon people to repent with a contrite heart and effect a change of heart in themselves in order to be able to enter the Kingdom of God. Jesus, too, began with a repetition of this Message. But, whereas John had painted God as a stern Judge, Lord Jesus spoke of Him as the All-Merciful Father Who loved to save the sinner. To Lord Jesus, faith in God, earnestness in prayer, and ethical discipline ranked far above religious observances and ceremonies. This made Him the friend of the oppressed and repressed sections of the people and those whom the orthodox church had excommunicated. Jesus welcomed them all, forgave their sins, and blessed them. "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest", said He; and thousands sought Him and found peace and solace at His feet. One of His chosen—Twelve—disciples was a publican, rejected and despised by the orthodox Jews. And, one of the greatest and closest of his followers was Mary Magdalene who was so sinful that it is said, Lord Jesus cast out seven devils from her.

One day as Lord Jesus was passing by, a crowd had collected around a woman who had been charged with adultery and had been sentenced "to be stoned to death." As the crowd was about to carry out this execution Lord Jesus came upon the scene. Such was the magnetic and divine personality that he possessed that the people instinctively obeyed His command to desist from the cruel act. When He had heard their story of the woman's "unpardonable" sin, He quietly said: "Let him that is without sin among you, cast the first stone on her." This powerful utterance of the Lord at once turned the gaze of each one there within himself. Who could be without sin? Introspection revealed their own defects. One by one, the people hung their heads down and left the place. "Where are they?" Lord Jesus asked the woman, "did not man condemn thee?" "No, my Lord," said she. "Neither do I condemn thee; go thy way and sin no more," said the Lord summing up in this beautiful incident the very essence of His Divine Message.

On another occasion, when a devotee, bathed Lord Jesus' feet with her tears, wiping them with her hairs and applying

precious ointment over them, the Lord blessed her and granted her forgiveness for all her sins. This enraged some of the people, who questioned His right to grant forgiveness for sins.

By now the first disciples had gathered around Lord Jesus. The Pharisees on one occasion found Jesus' disciples plucking corn on Sabbath Day and eating it. When this was brought to the notice of the Lord, He said: "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath; so that the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath." This greatly displeased the Pharisees who waited for another opportunity.

Universally it is known that Sivananda's own teaching, 'be good, do good,' sums up all the dynamic endeavours of his world-wide mission, and this very teaching is shown by Washington Gladden as the soul of the Christian culture. 'To be good and to do good', Washington Gladden states, 'are the two great objects set before the Christian; to develop a perfect character by rendering a perfect service. True Christian culture leads to and expresses itself in service, while faithful and loving service is the best means of Christian culture.' Describing the

nature of Christianity as a religion, Cumming comes to say the same thing, though elaborately and more comprehensively, 'Christianity is not a religion of transcendental abstraction, or brilliant speculation; its children are neither monks, mystics, epicureans, nor stoics.—It is the religion of loving, speaking, and doing as well as believing.—It is a life as well as a creed. It has a rest for the heart, a word for the tongue, a way for the feet, and a work for the hand. The same Lord who is the foundation of our hopes, the object of our faith, and the subject of our love, is also the model of our conduct, for "He went about doing good, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps."' When the Divine Heart displays itself through the life and action of Lord Jesus or of Sivananda, and has at its centre the welfare and spiritual ascension of all humanity, it cannot but voice the same teaching, the simple wisdom, the sublime message, 'be good and do good'.

While Jesus was teaching in a synagogue on a Sabbath Day, the Pharisees brought to him a sick man, wishing to find out if he would heal him on the Sabbath Day. Jesus turned upon them and asked: "Is it right to do good, or evil, on Sabbath Day?" They were unable to ans-

wer. Jesus turned to the sick man and healed him. This had conclusively set the Pharisees against Him.

Jesus had gone to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of the Passover and Nicodemus, one of the chief Pharisees, met the Lord at night. Though Nicodemus acknowledged Jesus to be a teacher who had come from God, he said: "I am not able to understand and appreciate all that you teach." To this the Lord replied in words pregnant with deep spiritual import: "A man must be born again if he is to see the Kingdom of God—reborn not of the body, but in the spiritual sense." Lord Jesus proclaimed that a true change of heart constituted this rebirth.

On his way back to Galilee from Jerusalem, Jesus passed through Samaria. At Sychar He took rest near a well, while His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. A Samaritan woman came to the well to fetch water; and the Lord asked her to give Him some water to drink. She hesitated as no law could have anything to do with Samaritans. The Lord then told her past life. At once she understood that Lord Jesus was a Prophet; and He,

too, admitted that He was the Messiah. The surprised woman at once spread the news to all the people of the city and they gathered around him, proclaiming: "This is truly the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

—*Sivananda*

Transcribing a line that describes Hinduism as the most tolerant and the noblest of world's living religions, Anne Alexander proceeds to speak sympathetically and appreciatively of Sivananda's work on the leading ideas, the cultural spirit and the philosophic thought embodied in the Hindu faith.

SIVANANDA'S work on Hinduism is highly interesting and enlightening. It contained a very clear and organised picture of what the Hindu faith, ethics, scriptures and philosophy are. It noted first of all that Hinduism was the oldest and most tolerant of all religions and went on to explain that a true Hindu is one who believes implicitly in the Vedas, Karma and renunciation.

Sivananda then gave a very clear ex-

position of the Karma doctrine, that everything you do will be justly rewarded or punished and noted that the past, present and future of Karma, and how man can control them with the illustration of the man by the river with his bow and arrow.

Sivananda's discussion of philosophy as the rational part of religion impressed me much. He well describes the different theories of the philosophies like Sankara and Ramanuja, and how they regarded Brahman in relation to the soul and to the world. I should say Sivananda's work is highly rewarding and should be read by anyone interetsed in the culture and ideas of the oldest religion in the world.

—*Anne Alexander.*

Attribute it either to Christianity or to Sivananda Literature, the accent on renovation, on sanctification, on perfection, is the ascent of all high and noble literature, of all great living religions, of all those towering Men who have laboured by the instances of their lives, to elevate all mankind into an environment of perfection in personal Nature. Contrasting Christianity with science, Thompson leaves us with this perception

that yields us an insight into the central argument and aim of the former: 'Where science speaks of improvement, Christianity speaks of renovation; where science speaks of development Christianity speaks of sanctification; where science speaks of progress, Christianity speaks of perfection.' Towards the same aim the moving power of all enduring literature is directed, and that very objective it is that is implicit in the functions Lawrence finds Christianity execute every day and every hour: 'Where Christianity may not convince, it enlightens; where it does not convert, it restrains; where it does not renew, it refines; where it does not sanctify, it subdues and elevates.'

IN his innermost core, man is essentially Divine. But upon this field of human personality two forces keep acting. They are the forces of good and evil, of light and of darkness. The Divine and the undivine both operate in the human consciousness of man. Completely to overcome and eradicate the undivine elements and to fully manifest the supreme Divine element in all its radiant light and glory is to be achieved only through the living of the Christ-life, to the utmost faithful detail. This is spiritual life. This is Yoga.

This is Sadhana (spiritual practice). This is the method of Self-realisation. This is the great Path which leads us to Immortality, Supreme Bliss and Eternal Peace.

If the Christ-life is to be lived, first of all, the child-Christ has to be born in us. Then only the real spiritual life commences for the aspirant. The first manifestation of the Divine urge in the form of spiritual aspiration and the recognition of the spiritual ideal signifies the birth of the infant Jesus within the seeker's being. From hence starts the living of the Christ-life in all its spiritual details of sublime purity, faith in the Divinity, mercy, compassion, love, selflessness, prayerfulness, etc. Hence starts the life of earnest Yoga and Sadhana, of self-restraint and simplicity, of unbroken serenity and peace, balance of mind, unflinching courage in the face of all oppositions and perfect dedication to the worship of God through the service of man. This is the spiritual implication within of the Christmas that is celebrated without.

With the advent of this Christ-spirit within the heart of seekers, all human desires come to an end and they are replaced

by pure higher Divine aspiration, Spirituality overcomes materialism. You break free from your slavery to the senses. You begin to live a new life, a divine life of purity, love, renunciation, humility, non-attachment and selflessness. Your life becomes sublime like the life of Christ. You begin to live a life of complete faith and dependence upon God. You always think of God, talk of Him and live for Him. Helping others becomes a real joy to you. You become a living witness of the Divine. All your life's activities flow towards God.

Here a very small, but very beautiful, point of deep significance is to be noted without fail.. It reveals a deep spiritual Law. It is the time and the manner of the birth of the Lord upon the holy Christmas day. Jesus Christ was not born in a grand palace. He was not born to very wealthy or learned parents. Also He was not born in the full blaze of day-light with the knowledge of all men. Jesus Christ was born in a simple lowly place, a corner of a stable. He was born to humble and poor parents, who had nothing to boast about, except their own spotless character and holiness. Also He was born in the darkness in the obscure hour of midnight, when

no one even knew about it, except a few divinely blessed people.

Even when born in India, or, nominally, into the Hindu faith, saints of the stature of Sivananda do constitute in their own right, and in their own lives as much as in their own teachings, the best exponents of Christianity, the Christian-pattern of living that has its first and consummate expression in Christ. They are those and their literatures are such that make the Christians the true Christians, the Hindus the true Hindus, the Muslims the true Muslims, the Buddhists the true Buddhists. It is the task and triumph of their lives and their spoken and written message, even as it is justly claimed to be the task and triumph of Christianity, 'to make men and nations true and just and upright in all their dealings, and to bring all law, as well as all conduct, into subjection and conformity to the law of God'.

The above point of deep significance tells you that the spiritual awakening comes to the seeker, who is perfectly humble and "meek" and "poor in spirit." The quality of true humility is one of the indispensable fundamentals. Then we find simplicity, holiness and the renunciation of all desire for worldly wealth and pride of

learning. Thirdly, even as Christ was born unknown to the world and in the obscurity of darkness, even so, the advent of the Christ-spirit takes place in the inwardness of man when there is total self-effacement self-abnegation. Where self-aggrandisement and vanity abide, there the descent of Divinty cannot occur, for these expressions of egotism are ever a bar to the unfoldment of the Divine consciousness. Empty thyself and I shall fill thee—is the divine admonition of the Lord. The Kingdom of Heaven within is for the lowly in spirit. Thus, true humility and self-effacement are the beautiful harbingers, the dawnlights, as it were, that herald the break of the joyous new day, the advent of the new era of a life in Spirit. When they appear within you, then the holy Christmas takes place. There is a new birth then.

This is the birth into a Divine Life. It was the secret of this birth that centuries ago the Lord Jesus Sweetly explained to the good Nicodemus. The good man did not quite understand what precisely Christ meant when He taught that a man must be born again if he is to attain the Kingdom of God. "How can this be?" Ni-

codemus asked. Then it was that Christ explains that this birth is inward, not of the body, but in the Spirit. Such inner spiritual birth is essential if the Supreme is to be attained, if true bliss is to be experienced. Rejoicing takes place only when Christmas has come.

—*Sivananda.*

Lo, in the orient when the gracious light
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye
Doth homage to his new-appearing sight,
Serving with looks his sacred majesty.

So run the first four lines of the seventh sonnet of Shakespeare. Where their meaning is concerned, a school-boy would need little labour to gain a grasp, and, in his triumphant innocence, congratulate himself on having caught the very soul of Ben Johnson's "sweet swan of Avon". But, the splendour of the opening line, and the sheer grandeur of expression in the half of the next, would, by their transporting touch, make luminous the aesthetic self of a Saintsbury, and let him linger long on every letter limned into these lines. He would hover round the poetic term 'orient'; laden with the melody of meaning 'gracious' would haunt his mind; and, 'burning'

would form the central theme of his dreamy discourses. The 'attitude' of phrase is the thing, he would say, and go on to explain, argue, persuade that Shakespeare is the great master of "the Adamastor, the King of the Waves of the vasty deep of style". In the event of a denial of this statement of his, Saintsbury would as a measure in personal justification, refer you to Romeo's dying speeches as having Grand Style 'in perfection and in rare volume', and would like to meet you, foot to foot, you taking any passage you like from Homer, Dante, Milton, or any one else, and to fight the question out, "phrase by phrase, line by line, and total impression by total impression." Not that we do not feel amused by the school-boy's jubilant claim nor that we do not appreciate the enlightened opinion of Saintsbury; but that we are gently drawn away from this 'school-boy' and 'this scholar', by a secret evolutionary demand insistently made within ourselves, for the fulfilment of our life in an illumined and integrated living, to the greatness of a Saint, a Sage, a Prophet, as the Light of lights, suggested to our sensitivity in those four lines of Shakespeare.

CHRIST'S teachings constitute the essential principles that regulate the course of the spiritual aspirant in his quest of the great ideal. Faith is the fundamental

key to success in spiritual life. Christ has also warned people that many may come in his garb but may not be real teachers. One has to be aware of these deceitful ones and lay one's trust in the true teacher, the Christ. The power of faith is such that, as Christ puts it, even a grain of it can move a mountain hence. Thought of food and raiment is not to become the burden of the aspirant. It is the instruction of Jesus that God knows more than man and that He knows how to protect man. The one duty of a person is to come to Him alone for rest, light and salvation. But "not everyone that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." It is not verbal humility and devotion but sincere feeling of dedication and surrender that can take one to God. Spiritual effort has its aim not in public worship, adoration in the streets and beating of drums, but in silent sacrifice and intense feeling of union with the One without a second. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for

theirs is the Kingdom of heaven." God reveals Himself to man not until he becomes ready to sacrifice his life for His sake.

The greatness of the devotee of God is like a sweet fragrance which makes itself felt by all, by its very presence. "They are the light of the world; a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." The spiritual essence that constitutes the core of a person in union with Divine, reveals itself, of its own accord, without any kind of effort on the part of the person who is the medium of that revelation. The sun does not proclaim himself when he rises in the sky, but his very presence makes itself felt by those who have eyes to see and sense to feel. The owl does not know the sun, the blind do not see the light, the ignorant are not aware of the moving spirit of God that dwells in the tabernacle here and shines through the saint. The acts of Christ and his disciples are to be taken not in the sense of processes that have their end in the fulfilment of an individual wish, but as parts of cosmic movement tending to the establishment of God's glory in the universe.

The assertion that man is made in the image of

God was inspired by no philosophical speculation, did not proceed from a mind absorbed in idealistic fancies, but is emergent from a Nature that lived in the Kingdom of God while living on earth. We appreciate the phenomenon of Christ better, when we reflect over some of the best facets of the Truth of Man caught by Emerson when he quietly wrote that 'every man is a divinity in disguise, a god playing the fool,' when Henry Giles affirmed that man is greater than the systems of worlds, when Young coined his phrases on the nature of man, such as 'the insect infinite', 'the dim miniature of greatness absolute', when John Davidson sermonised that men are the Universe become conscious and that the simplest man should consider himself too great to be called after any name. Modern Western mind has, far from living by the Christ's conception of man, lived into the idea of man it derived from Adam Smith, as a bargaining animal, from Aristotle, as a rational animal, from Herbert Spencer, as a social animal, from Karl Marx as a sheer economic unit....and so on. That every man is a conscious power of the infinite Being, a dynamic manifestation of the absolute Reality, is Sivananda's perosnal experience, and by its very impulsion is he justified in addressing the meanest of his correspondents as a King of kings, as an Emperor of emperors....

The life of Christ is a veritable sacrament, an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace that descends from the Sovereign of the universe. It is the unbounded love of God that came in flesh and suffered for the sins of humanity to raise the latter to the source of this love. Love and sacrifice are the key to open the door of immortality. Prayer, not for one's own salvation from pain, but for the redemption of others from the ignorance of the law of God, is the true form which love and sacrifice take in the life virtuous. The miracles which Christ performed are indicative of the Omnipotence of Him for whose sake Christ came here. The mission of the life of Jesus is not merely to open the eyes of man to the light that shines beyond the dust of the earth, but also to hoist the banner of the kingdom of heaven on this very earth, by winning for righteousness victory over evil and the temptations of Satan. Life here is a blending of the relative laws of the earth and the absolute law of God. "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." A development of the aspiration for the Spirit, in harmony with the rules that regulate the kingdom of God

and the kingdom of the earth, is necessary in order that the aspirant may be free from the error of the over-emphasis of non-essentials and of neglect of essentials in this relative life. Man is God and brute crossed at one point, and so he has to transcend the brute by an intelligent application of the divine power within him to what is active in him as the undivine force.

Humanity has always represented its great men in terms of Light. Sir Edwin Arnold's "Light of the World", and "Light of Asia", E.E. Hale's "Lights of Two Centuries", Vincent Sheon's "Lead Kindly Light" and such other titles eloquently speak in corroboration of our view that the wisdom of mankind has always associated the phenomenon of a great spiritual personality with Light. Memory tells us, in the recent past of India, there shone saints and sages with an extraordinary brilliance but their appeal to humanity was much too much restricted; and, they are now but splendid shadows. Today on the Eastern skies of this scientific and technological world, there shines brighter than ever the sun of Sivananda which by its special and varied greatness, by the luminous reality of, and by the many-sided activity by, its transfigured

spiritual personality has been to tens of thousands of persons, a matter of irresistible attraction, a thing of sheer delight, an inspiring light that pours into the lives of all a new significance and a new opulence. It is this light that has cast for us the most valuable light on the immortal Light that Jesus is to all the world.

Christ was a great realist when he stressed the importance of kindness, love, service and worship of God as the Father in heaven. He was a great idealist when he asserted that kingdom of heaven is within, that there is nothing from without a man that entering into him can defile him, but the things which come out of him defile him. The oneness and the organic nature of the universe is what is mad explicit by his synthesis of the real and the ideal nature of human experiences in the universe. God is within and also without. The world is within us and also without us. Asceticism and love are both our duties. A parallel integration of the interior and the exterior forces through spiritual regeneration would confirm the kingdom of God on earth. In the teachings of Christ a careful student finds wisdom and holiness, metaphysics and ethics, realism

and idealism, self-withdrawal and self-expression, knowledge and its object, fused into one, in a most wondrous and comprehensible manner. Only a God-man can do it, and Christ was one such. His life is a precept, and his precept is the word of God, by hearing and following which the unending beatitude of man is made secure.

—*Sivananda.*

They ill-read man, who read into him the Darwinian half-truths; they read man aright who read him against the background of Jesus, of the Christ, of the true Man, the Man of Nazareth, who is the destiny of all mankind, accepted even by the most fastidious reason as the highest that humanity can reach, at once its perfect image and supreme Lord, 'the condescension of divinity, and the exaltation of humanity', without whom all history is, as Renan concludes, incomprehensible, and a rejection of whose existence reduces, as Napolean maintained the world to an inexplicable riddle, and the history of 'our' race to a phenomenon baffling satisfactory explanation. It is with such a right reading of Man that Sivananda opened his preceding and revealing essay on Jesus.

THE way in which Jesus lived and taught was simple, ytt sublime. His mode of teaching was something extraordinary. Jesus was no academic scholar. He could lay claim to neither degrees nor doctorate. He was not a Pundit or a savant. He had not attained proficiency or mastery in any practical art or science. He did neither indulge in high-flown oratory nor deliver learned pulpit sermons. When He spoke, He spoke but shortly and His brief words were few. His sayings were short, pithy and almost aphoristic. But His words were vibrant with an extraordinary power that was not of this world. They were vital and aflamed. They burnt themselves into the depths of the very consciousness of His hearers. And the reason?

When Jesus spoke, His blessed words came from the depths of a limitless Love and an infinite divine compassion that thrilled and thrilled again with an all-consuming, powerufl desire to do good to men, to serve,; to help and to save. This compassion to purify, to raise and to save mankind verily constitutes the sacred Heart of Jesus the Christ. This Love enlivened His words with a Divine Force, which made them to be permanently en-

shrined in the hearts of the fortunate hearers of His own blessed times and no less of the millions who read them even to this day through the holy pages of the sacred Bible.

Jesus was absorbed in the task of showing unto mankind a way out of this mundane life and attaining Eternal Bliss. He came to save man from this ocean of birth-death existence and to take them across to the other shore of immortal Life. Therefore, He preached the gospel of practical spirituality. Leaving aside all abstruse philosophical theory and subtle intellectual researches, Jesus told man how he must live, what he must think, what he must feel, and what he must do. To do this He clothed even the highest truths of spiritual life with simple stories and parables, which even the common man in the street could easily grasp and comprehend. Couched in the form of simple parables, the deepest wisdom of spiritual life became expressed before man, through the sweet and blessed words of Divine Jesus. Innumerable are the divine admonitions of Christ. Even a consideration of a select few of them would help to throw a great

deal of light upon the path towards the attainment of spiritual goal.

—*Sivananda.*

May we not find adequate grounds for assuming that it is only such towering sages like Sivananda that can be the ablest interpreters of the Life and Teachings of Jesus....

"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand," said the Lord at the conclusion of the famous Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon was not a philosophical discursion to be listened to and understood, perhaps, and forgotten later. In that glorious Sermon He had breathed the spirit of God. The Sermon was the word of God, the Eternal Message that is ever afire with the flame of Divinity. Jesus lives in that Sermon.

Remember, the angels had commanded Joseph to christen the child Jesus, for He

would save people from sin. Now study the Sermon on the Mount again and again: is that not a Light that saves you from the darkness of sin? Every word of it exhorts you to turn away from sin and enter the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God. By his own glorious life Lord Jesus had kept the doors to the Kingdom of God wide open for people of all times to enter. The Lord's life here was nothing but a living commentary on that Sermon.

Jesus was God Himself. The Holy Scripture reminds us of this fact again and again. Yet, why did He have to endure so much of persecution and suffering? Could He not have by a mere exercise of His Divine Will overwhelm His foes? Yes. But the Supreme Incarnation of Love that Lord Jesus was, he had willed it that His own Life would be an example for people to emulate. Therefore, He behaved like any other human being: and while so doing, fully demonstrated in his own brief but eventful life the Great Sermon that He gave on the Mount.

The inner urge in man to build himself beyond all that he is in the present, to surpass himself,

to seek for light and resolve the many contradictions involved in all forms of empirical life, the function of certain self-exceeding capacities, the desire and dynamism in him to transcend his normal manhood and put on the poise, the peace, the power of a mighty Divinity, are essentially activities occasioned and determined by the genius of spiritual evolution inherently operative in the formula of human existence. Incapable of a right response to the working of the spiritual factors in their personality, men have given this basic urge many wrong turns; and certain modern thinkers who have discerned its presence in men, have envisaged for it different goals....Jesus, the eternal light of the world, and Sivananda, the greatest living spiritual guide of the twentieth century, forming in themselves the one real Destiny of the noblest manhood, the End and Aim of all evolution as also the beginning and the conclusion of dynamic divine beneficence on earth, have illustrated by their lives and illuminated by their teaching the exact nature of the denoument of the drama of the developmental unfoldment of the highest Consciousness latent in man.

Both at the very commencement and at the conclusion of the Sermon, He emphatically declares that it is the sacred

duty of all those who have had the blessed privilege of hearing the saving Message, *to do and to teach* the commandments to others. The Lord wants that your light should "shine before men", not for your own glorification, but in order that "they may see your *good works* and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Practise the Sermon on the Mount. Inspire other children of the Lord by precept as well as by example, to practise the glorious teachings it contains. Thus would the supreme mission of Lord Jesus, the mission of saving people from sin, be fulfilled. It is all the more urgent today that the Message of the Lord should spread throughout the world: for, once again mankind is rushing headlong towards destruction, towards unrighteousness, towards hatred and war. Only the Lord's Message can save the world today. The Divine words of the Sermon on the Mount should be engraved on the tablet of the heart of each man and woman today: and then and then alone can mankind know peace and prosperity.

The very first commandment is so thrilling. It is in the Lord's characteristic style of building up a climax. Prior to that day, it was considered unrighteous to kill any

being. Killing itself is the grossest manifestation of a feeling that stirs in the heart of man. The Lord wants to save man from this feeling; He suggests therefore a sovereign remedy that would at once cure him of the root-cause of the dangerous disease that manifests itself in murder. Anger! Anger is the greatest enemy of man. It destroys intelligence and under its sway man degenerates into something worse than a beast. The Lord exhorts you to get rid of this anger. Even to give verbal vent to this undivine emotion is sin. Do not use abusive words towards anyone: all are children of thy Father. All are thy own brothers. In everyone the Lord dwells. Do not call anyone "a fool". In his divine instruction the Lord goes still farther than that. The dire enemy of man should be driven out of his heart. Not only that, in that heart the opposite virtue, love, should be installed. How beautifully He puts it! If this is not done, your worship of God who is All-Love, is hypocritical. Therefore, when you approach His altar, if an inimical thought arises in you, better leave the altar. Go to the person with whom you have a misunderstanding or quarrel. Get reconciled to him. Become friendlv with him once again: and then worship God.

Try this today. This is not an intellectual doctrine to be understood. It is the word of God to be put into practice. Do it now and see for yourself, what a great joy and peace you experience in your worship and in your meditation, if you have washed away all ill-feelings from your heart with the waters of cosmic love.

When your heart is filled with cosmic love, who can be your enemy? Someone else may entertain inimical feelings towards you; but in your heart the feeling of enmity should never arise. To you, he, too, is a brother, to be treated with the same love and consideration that you would have for the best of your friends. Jesus would not leave the least room for misunderstanding; ambiguity is foreign to Him. Instruction cannot be more practical than the way He has given it.

Whether it is Christ or his advocate Sivananda, we always find him throw his whole soul, his whole emphasis, all his powers of perception, the whole of his mission, upon the Greatness concealed in the heart even of the smallest of men. To see, to awaken, to develop the Greatness, the Godhead in each man and in each woman

is the 'raison d'etre' of the phenomenon of Christ, of Sivananda, of every prophet of their eminence,....; if they are hard on anything, they are hard on 'fault-finding'. Sivananda says, 'Lord Jesus utters a stern warning to His followers against a very common, but highly disastrous human failing concerning finding fault in others. This again is the work of the ego in man. It seeks to cover up its own deficiencies by discovering faults in others. Man is generally so much concerned about others' weaknesses and sins,—not that he wants to correct them, but to establish his superiority over them!—that he hardly ever bestows a thought on the million defects that gnaw at his own vitals. Who would like to feel that there are formidable deficiencies in one's own inner make-up? Only a spiritual hero would resolutely turn his gaze within and introspect, carrying on a searching self-analysis and strive to perfect himself. Lord Jesus wants everyone of us to be a spiritual hero, not a vain scandal-monger. "Why beholdest thou the mole that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thy own eye?" He asks, "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mole in thy brother's eye." This is a very serious warning that every seeker after Truth would do well to bear always in mind. Again let us assimilate

the wisdom of Christ laid in, "Physician heal thyself."

"Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." What a convincing argument He brings in support of this holy commandment! Why should you love your enemies? Not because you are greater than they! But because such is the nature of God in whose image you are made, and whose children you—and all—are.

Is the atheist denied God's Blessings? The very life-breath which the atheist uses in denying the very existence of God, is provided by Him. "He maketh His Sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth the rain on the just and on the unjust." Hatred ceaseth not by hatred; hatred ceaseth by love. Love conquers hatred and enmity. Righteousness conquers unrighteousness eventually. Love transforms the heart of man. There is no better way of winning over an enemy, and of transforming an evil-minded person, than to love him and to let him see in your own daily actions the glory of righteous living.

Love and righteousness should become part of your very nature. They should not be feigned nor be artificial. Therefore, when Lord Jesus commanded that you should not resist evil, He alluded to His own instruction that love should become your very nature. It requires extraordinary faith in God, realisation of His Omnipotence, understanding of the power of love, and supreme moral courage, not to resist evil, but "whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, to turn to him the other also."

By thus not resisting the evil and by demonstrating such love even in the face of evil, you are arousing the latent moral conscience in the evil-minded man. If you had adopted the policy of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth", the moral conscience in the other person would be completely buried under the evil example you place before him. But, when a man smites you on your cheek and, instead of getting it back "in the same coin", experiences your love, the righteous way you reacted, he is bound to be profoundly influenced by your example: and he would sooner or later reflect over the incident, repent for his action and regain his moral conscience.

Ponder long and ponder much we must, before we can justly claim a full comprehension of the nature of the merits Sivananda has packed into his most luminous interpretations of the character and the message of Jesus the Christ.

The Law Courts in the world could as well be closed down and people enabled to live in peace and amity, if people practise this rule; "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." Does the Lord want you to sit idly and watch yourself being cheated and robbed? No! He wants you to be positively charitable; He wants you to run to the succour of the needy. If he robs you of your coat, because he needs it, better give him your cloak also, so that he would be more comfortable. In reality, along with your cloak, you are giving him the priceless gift of wisdom; he sees in your action the true nature of love, the glory of charity and indifferent attitude of a man-of-God towards the objects of this world. The cloak (the worldly object) is perishable and you are going to part with it one day or the other; but the fruit of the gift, the reward of the charity,—especially giving it to the man who would rob

you of it—is immortality for you and inner transformation for him. It requires not only moral courage and love, but a supreme dispassion for the objects of the world, to practise this. And, Lord Jesus significantly asks: "What availeth man, if he gains the world, but loseth the soul?" The loss of all objects of the world is nothing compared to the acquisition of this one virtue: charity.

—*Sivananda.*

The life of Christ is a challenge to the higher conscience of every man, to measure by the stretch of his soul the perfection of the Father in Heaven. Thomas Carlyle it was that said, 'It is not to taste sweet things but to do noble and true things, and vindicate himself under God's Heaven as a god-made Man, that the poorest son of Adam dimly longs.' Show him the way of doing that, the dullest daydruge kindles into a hero. But, who are they that would show the way? Who, but such as those that wear the stature of Jesus and hold the mission of Sivananda? Such men are what we call the original men: they come to us at first-hand; they are messengers 'sent from the Infinite Unknown with tidings to us'

CHRIST has given Himself to mankind

not so much as a personality but as a way of living, as a Path. He embodies in Himself the method of the divine Ascent. To rise from the little human personality we now possess and ascend into the Christ-consciousness is to ascend from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to Light that lasts for ever, and from death to immortality that is the source of all joy. When we have the Christ Ideal before us as a shining example we cannot utter the excuse, "Which is the way? We do not know the way. We would fain follow it if only we knew." The ringing assertion of Christ, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no one comes to Father but by me." Yes, verily, verily is it true that growing into the Christ Ideal is the one sure and certain key to the Kingdom of Immortality.

In order that this transformation be brought about, the Saviour has Himself given invaluable cues if only we pause to discern them from His words and deeds. Recall the incident of the cleaning of the Temple and the visit of the Saviour to the house of Zecchus, the tax-gatherer in Jericho who resolved to atone for his past and to amply amend it by his changed mode of life. This then is the teaching,

the true secret of spiritual transformation. First, we must cleanse our inner nature thoroughly. Cleanse we must the temple of our heart, of all base elements, all cruelty, deceit, bargaining spirit and worldliness. Make it a real house of God, we must. This done, we must enter resolutely upon a changed course of life, turn a totally new leaf. Salvation is ours for we have attained freedom from sin and thus qualified ourselves for immortality and eternal Bliss.

This very law of spiritual life, Christ expressed in a yet fuller and direct manner when he expounded the Sadhana to Nicodemus the sincere Pharisee and again when he 'suffered little children to come unto Him' declaring, 'Unless ye become like little children you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven." We have to be born again and to become pure, innocent and egoless like little children. Then and then alone will the gates of the realm of radiant bliss swing open to us. But remember we should that the change should be real, deep and complete. Not mere outward change, not a change in profession, superficial conduct, but a radical change, a change that makes us totally different persons, entirely new persons! The old self in each of us must vanish *in toto*.

Sivananda; this able defender of the glory that was Jesus, says, 'Many have wrongly accused Christ of being unduly exuberant in his promises for a future blessedness in heaven. On the contrary, he concerned himself more with the present than with the distant future, since he asked people to live the day well in goodeness and in the service of God. and "take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.' "

In His own simple Person, Jesus typifies this sublime Child, the simple, pure, innocent and egoless child of the Father. His trust in the Father is complete. He is the 'beloved Son' in whom the Father is 'well pleased. To become like Him, we have to *follow Him*. This is the call of the Christ-spirit to Man.

The Lord saith to us today, even as He did say in those blessed days to Philip of Bethsaida, the two thrilling words, "Follow Me." This is to be, not in the sense of His life but in His ascent on the radiant inner Path of Goodness, Love, Compassion and utter self-effacement. And for those blessed ones who are prepared to 'Follow *Him*' He has shown the Way by three *spe-*

cial Commandments, firstly to the Pharisee who asks, "Master which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" and then through those memorable words, during those tragic last moments of His freedom as they walk up to the fateful garden of Gethsamane on the Mount of Olives. Saith the Lord, "God is one. Thou shalt love the Lord with *all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind* and *with all thy strength*". And then, "Thou shalt love *thy neighbour as thyself*. The highest Vedantic Atma-bhav! And again, "I give you a new commandment that you love one another as I have loved you."

JESUS embodied in Himself the triple quality of Satya, Ahimsa and absolute Brahmacharya. During the entire duration of his sublime life, Christ lived as the visible expression of the highest Truth. He was a living witness to the supreme Reality essentially indwelling in Man. In His dealing with the outside world He was verily Ahimsa-incarnate. With words brimming with the true spirit of Ahimsa he preaches the doctrine of non-retaliation. "Present thy left cheek to the assailant that smites thee on the right. If a man takes away thy cloak forcibly offer him

thy coat too."

No test, struggle, torment or persecution whatsoever could ruffle Him up to wrath or retaliation. In His personal life He was indeed Purity Itself. Unless ye become like little children you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. You have to be absolutely pure like the innocent little ones. One of the greatest examples of Naishthika Brahmacharya, strict celibacy and spotless chastity, mankind has in Jesus the Christ, He mentions how some men "make eunuchs of themselves" for the sake of the kingdom of Heaven. Thus the threefold strand of Ahimsa, Satya and Brahmacharya were woven into the very fabric of the Divine Life that Jesus lived.

—*Sivananda.*

Some of the passages of Sivananda on Jesus are, we have observed, far more illuminating than most portions in the Christological literature; let us now turn to the turn Sivananda gives characteristically to the Christ's phrase "daily bread". 'The "daily bread" is not merely the physical bread or the food that we give to the body to keep it alive. For, the Lord assures you that God knows your needs and, even as

He clothes the lilies in the field with rich and delightful colour and feeds the fowls of the air, He will feed you and clothe you without your praying for them. Meditate upon this and realise God's supreme Grace that gave you and that sustains your life. You will clearly understand the meaning of His Immortal Utterance: 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." By thus revolutionising the values alone can dispassion arise in the heart and the Kingdom of God be realised in one's own heart. 'For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Develop discrimination. Care not for the riches of this world; they are perishable and they cannot give you lasting peace and happiness. Devote yourself to the acquisition of spiritual wealth by regular prayer, meditation and charity. This prayer to the Lord is, therefore, for spiritual bread, spiritual food,—in other words, for devotion to Him and for right discrimination. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you," said He.'

CHRIST, the Son of Man, representing

the life and voice of humanity and forming as it were the sum and substance of the essence of man, is the Son of God, the incarnate effulgence of the Sovereign of the Universe. It is the crystallization of spirit that we call the Mystic Christ, the Light that is born to save the world of darkness. As the darkness of the world is not an outward phenomenon, so is the remover of this darkness not a mere physical personality. Great men are not seen from their bodies. It is not form or the body that is the great man. The great man is the behaviour, the conduct, the character, the speech, the thought and conscious expression of any kind. From these special characteristics the presence of the great man is inferred and directly perceived. He is great who has comprehended that stupendous ocean of Spirit, the Great God that twinkles in all eyes, that resides in the hearts of all beings. We have in Christ the great man of the Spirit, and his life is picturesque drama of exalted spiritual living.

Ecce Homo! Behold Christ! To what heights of the greatness of Spirit a man may not rise! Behold Buddha! To what extent man may not

grow compassionate! Look at Shakespeare! To what measure would not a man master the powers of expression in a language and gain the fundamental psychological insights into universal human nature! Behold Plato! How well does the son of man turn the coin of Jove! Behold Sankara! What a giant in dialectic and in intellect!....Are all these Men, the true Men, and the greatest of them, the Christ and the Buddha, fictitious characters? If fictitious characters they are not, why needs a man doubt the immense possibilities he holds in his bosom....?

From his manifestation to his re-absorption, Christ displayed the magnificence of God and established His Glory on earth. In Christ one finds the "living liberated Man" of the Indians. As one standing at noon in cool waters up to the waist experiences cold and heat simutaneously, the illumined sage moving on earth, with a body, experiences bliss and trouble simultaneously, with his head and heart in Heaven and feet on earth. Jesus came to make people understand and know in experience that the aim of life is not to do something else, but to be something else. It is not wrong action that should attract our attention and demand rectification, but

the organic defect in us which is the source and the root of wrong action. Unless one is reborn there is no hope. To become something completely different, to change one's nature, to be initiated into the unique spiritual experience, means dying to the life of flesh and being alive to the superior awareness. It is not the ceremonial act of the Jew, but the consciousness-experience of the Christian that is the ultimate solace of the individual, that is at present confined to the narrow tabernacle which is the abode of all distortion and pain. It is not subjection to rule and rigidity of ritual that is the law of spirit, but perfect freedom in the Glory of God-consciousness. Man is the child of the Universe by birth, but he is the child of God by re-birth. Self-control and asceticism are the roads to inner peace. The pleasures of the world are vain, tantalizing and deceitful; they are not worth being resorted to. He who loves the world loves not the Father.

The stresses of physical life entangle the higher and nobler reaches of the soul, and to keep one's balance in the face of manifest hostility is indeed a tremendous task. It is given to a very few like Jesus

to dive into the depths constantly and regain the solacing consciousness which is immaterial and trans-emipirical. The whole life of Jesus is one tale of the march of the soul to its destination which is the complete unfolding of consciousness. A life of mere negativity is not what is preached by Christ. It is not only the emptying of the soul, the selling away of whatever we have, the parting with everything that we possess, but the supreme fulfilment of Spirit through divine contemplation.

A typical Indian greatness and Indian accent Sivananda brings into his exposition of the significance of the type of Godhead Christ had showed himself to be, among mortals, and for all mankind.

But, the rejection of the outward show is a necessary pre-condition of this divine fulfilment. We cannot fill a vessel with nectar when it contains already filth to the brim. Spiritual life is at once the transcending of the mundane consciousness and the saturation of oneself in the meta-empirical Self-consciousness or God-consciousness. The student or aspirant who

wishes to lead the life ideal should receive inspiration from the conduct of Jesus, from his life and teachings, live a life of holiness and piety, embrace humility and poverty, become a friend of the poor, love the neighbour as himself, sacrificing his all to Him, suffer and weep for His sake, cast off the flesh and its passions, and die to be born for the life eternal. It means the withdrawal of faith in things that seem and perish resting on the firm belief in the omnipotence of the Maker of all things, and caring not for oneself and one's needs, for God shall, with His simultaneous knowledge of past, present and future, take care of all. This reborn soul is the sage, the redeemed one who is one with God. The son and the Father are one. The universe produces a rare ripe fruit of a saint from its fine flower of virtue and knowledge, makes him the cream of mankind and sacrifices him to the Great Father Here is the consummation of existence. Christ's ascension to Heaven is regaining of the Consciousness of God.

Adjudged more valuable in the message it conveys to, and the impact it leaves upon, the awakened human mind, than Gandhi's 'Experiments with

Truth', Rousseau's 'Confessions' and Goethe's 'Truth and Beauty', Sivananda's epistolary autobiography entitled 'Siva Gita' contains such inspiring principles of life that would have a full-throated commendation by Christ Himself. When such a life seeks to illustrate in words the life of Jesus, we have a most reliable and almost a first-hand biography.

Christ was the matchless spiritual teacher who pointed out that the Kingdom of Heaven is within. All his other teachings are a commentary on this text. His teaching is summed up by his statement: 'I and my Father are one.' *Tat Twam Asi*—thou art That.

An almost supernal purity rested like a divine mantle upon His sublime personality. His life was a wonderful combination of Jnana, Bhakti and Karma, based upon a supreme Para Vairagya. An ideal integral development of head, heart and hand has rendered His life a model for mankind to emulate for all eternity. Christ was ever conscious of His inseparable identity with the Supreme Self. Yet deep devotion and love for the personal God constantly found expression in Him in the form of prayers, praises and glorification. And in

his actual day-to-day life he was the very personification of the spirit of Karma Yoga. His entire life was a continuous ministry unto the afflicted. His feet moved but to reach where aid was needed. If his hands moved it was but to help the troubled and oppressed. His tongue spoke only to utter soft, honeyed words of compassion consolation, inspiration and enlightenment. With the very glances of His luminous Yogic eyes Jesus awakened, elevated and transformed those whom he gazed upon. He felt, thought, talked and acted for the good of others. Amidst this all He dwelt in the unbroken awareness of the assertion "I and my Father are one." His life was that of a Sage in Sahaja Samadhi.

As to how would a Christ educate humanity, Sivananda had stated earlier. It is the way of both Jesus and Sivananda. Of the education of man, the same thing was said in different words and in a different spirit, when John Ruskin wrote, "You do not educate a man by telling him what he knew not, but by making him what he was not. He only is advancing in life whose heart is getting softer, whose blood warmer, whose brain quicker, whose spirit is entering into living peace."

In Jesus the Man, the aspirant or the Sadhak finds two traits to be faithfully emulated, namely, an admirable moral courage in being witness to Truth. His life displays a silent yet supreme heroism in the face of the most, determined opposition, persecution and misundertsanding. And he has set an example how a true seeker repulses the temptations on the spiritual path. Long before the outward drama of crucifixion Jesus had voluntarily crucified Himself spiritually by annihilating the lower self and living a purely divine life.

The great Rishi that He was, the Man of Galilee exemplified in himself the "Sthitadheeh muni" the Lord describes in the sacred Gita. Jesus was for ever the Self-absorbed sage, perfectly balanced in the midst of opposites. He never lost His calm even for a single moment of His intensely-lived life. He neither rejoiced in pleasure nor grieved in pain. Looking with perfect equal vision upon friend and foe, intent only upon universal weal this perfected Siddha Purusha typifies that magnanimous state of *Sarva dharmaan parityajya mamekam sharanam vraja,* the compassionate voice of this God-Man called aloud to all

mankind "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden", and promised to "relieve their burden" and grant them rest. Come! Come! Come! was the divine call. And how? Casting thy care upon Him for He careth for thee. Thy work is to intently think of Him and Him alone. Never care for anything else for does He not look after the "lilies in the field and the birds in the air?" Depend on Him and He will care for thee; for, *Ananyaschintayanto mam ye janah paryupasate, thesham nityabhiyuktanam yogakshemam vahamyaham*, is the promise of the Lord.

—*Sivananda.*

The literature of Sivananda is the literature of a saint, a pre-eminent saint, and as to who the saints are and what exactly their functions are in the world that is ours, Sivananda himself speaks in the context of the life-pattern of Christ he depicts.

SAINTS incarnate themselves in accordance with a wish in the supreme Father of the universe, and for the purpose of raising humanity from ignorance, error and evil, for elevating mankind to a life

of righteousness and beatitude. The all-powerful spiritual Law that governs the universe manifests itself in infinite forms to establish itself in the realm of manifestation. Each form thus manifested bears witness to the Light Eternal. The suffering of the son of God, Christ is a brilliant example of how the incarnated symbol of the eternal bears witness to its source. There is a great meaning implied in the suffering of the Saints, whether it is deliberately imposed upon himself by himself in the form of ascetic denial or it is imposed on him by external agencies. He that loves the world loves not the Father, and he that dies for the sake of the son of God, truly lives. The implication of that this is that to establish the righteousness of God in this mundane realm and to bear witness to the undying law that is supermundane, the son of God, the great saint, lives the life of an abnegation of conformity to the customs and rules of the deluded earth and affirms with all force the non-earthly character of the ideal life. To die to the narrow life of the earth is to live in the peace that passeth all understanding.

Christ has said that he came here to

obey the commands of his Father, to do the Will of his Father; and he has also said that the heaven of the Father is within all. This means that the life of the Saint is a sacrifice done for the sake of asserting the spiritual law that which is within all. The All which is within everyone is the true Father of humanity and all beings. The life of man is meant to demonstrate the goodness and the love, the wisdom and the truth which is his own origin. The assertion of the righteousness of the universal life which is an expression of the great Father in heaven requires therefore the assertion of all the unifying forces in this world of diversity. The life of the saint is a sacrament, a holy act, a divine worship. Suffering is inevitable to the saint who is the son of God, for, as the Christ has said, the one that is of God has no place to rest. Nothing here can satisfy the infinite impulse to be righteous and to do the righteous. From birth to crucifixion the life of Jesus has been a saga of the process of self-perfection. The incidents in his life represent the microcosmic as well as the mascrocosmic changes that take place in the history of the evolution of the universe towards self-realisation in the existence of God.

'Great men' says Sivananda 'are not those who speak much or run fast, nor those who work wonders, but those that think deep, are poised in a contemplative awareness of the Divine Truth, and live divinely. Deep thinking consists in an exalted attitude, an elevated vision which finds itself rooted in the consciousness of the Imperishable. They are the great heroes who have gone to the other shore of the ocean of death and suffering and greater still are the saviours who offer the redeeming hand to the soul that writhes to have a glimpse of the Light that shall never flicker, that shall never fade away....In the crying babe, in the playing boy, in the fiery youth, in the puzzled person, and in the disillusioned old man, the Sage perceives the same Atman, the same Self. Outward form and peculiarity of nature do not matter with him. The apparent change which the worldly call death does not belong to the Divine Spirit within. Life continues beyond. Man sleeps with one encasement and wakes up after a short while, with another encasement. Death has lost its dread for him who has achieved the Impossible, known the Unknown, eluded the grasp of Death Itself!' Sivananda asseverates further 'Spiritual life is not mere idle talk, nor is it an affair of mere sensation, but is an actual living in the transcendental Self; it is a spiritual experience of unalloyed delight, a life of fullness, perfection,

and one who leads a spiritual life becomes a centre of great spiritual force, a dynamic personality, radiating peace, distributing knowledge, bestowing bliss upon all, and those who come in close contact with him will be highly inspired, elevated and enlightened.' Where then are we given a ground for disputing the value of the spiritual individuals?

Every phase of life is a necessary moment in the continued endeavour of the universe to recognise itself in self-consciousness and unity of powers. Though the life of every person is indicative of the nature of the entire evolution of that individual, past as well as future, resulting in the experience of perfection, is a direct illustration of the conscious and systematic movement of the consciousness from its rudimentary individual state to the fully blossomed attainment of the infinite Godhead. If spiritual effort consciously and deliberately exerted can be defined as by gradual steps a natural revolt of the unspiritual forces is quite inevitable. It is true that ghee is burnt up when it is poured into fire, but if a maund of ghee is poured over a spark of fire, the spark will be extinguished. When the spark becomes a huge

conflagration any amount of ghee can be consumed by it. In like manner, the worldly tendencies would overpower the spiritual spark when it is in the infant stage, but the conflagration of spiritual consciousness shall burn up worldly tendencies and all evil. What is called the "dark night of the soul," in the terminology of the mystics, is a stage where the consciousness is smothered and is smouldering amidst the darkness of ignorance. The spiritual self is bound to succeed, and destroy nescience root and branch.

The work of the manifesting Spirit is not complete even when it has begun to keep through the vesture of flesh, after managing to save itself from the attacks of the outward nature. The greater troubel arises from the higher planes of nature. Difficult enough it is, no doubt, to pass through the forest of the gross physical nature, but more difficult and hazardous is the attempt to overcome the subtler forces of the vibrant mental nature which is the pivot of outward universal activity. When the soul sheds sufficient light, enough to blind the eyes of the psychological nature, a revolt of the latter becomes the result. This revolt is now in no way advan-

tageous to the lower nature; for it only means the revelation of the extraordinary power of spiritual knowledge and experience and the crucifixion of the flesh, the very playground of the lower nature. The individualistic vestment is cast off, the turbulent passionate nature is punished and the son of Man re-enters the Kingdom of God which is the birth-right of the son of God.

Such is the marked spirituality of India that upon its soil, saints enjoy a strong social reference, are revered highly, and approached, by all classes of people, see their pictures become objects of adoration, find their places the places of pilgrimage, and their presence a healer of the various kinds of human ills....God-men are held in 'infinitely' greater esteem than the rulers of the earth, holiness is prized above kingdom, royal pomp always grows conscious of its meanness in the presence of divine piety. It is to the vision of such an India that Christ reveals some of the best but unperceived excellences of his intrinsic greatness....and even the parables of Christ when presented by the Indian Mind, gain a fuller colour and a richer significance.

THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX-COLLECTOR

Two men went up to a temple, to pray. One was a Pharisee and the other a Tax-Collector. The Pharisee noticed the Tax-Collector praying at a distance. So, he prayed within himself: "God, I thank thee: for I am not like the other men, extortioners, unjust adulterers, not even like this tax-collector. I have fasted twice a week, and I give tithes of all that I get." The Tax-Collector did not even raise his head, but beat his breast and prayed: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

God was pleased with the Tax-Collector. For, in his heart was humility. The Pharisee was proud of his piety. And, the pride overshadowed all other virtues. Religious pride is dangerous. It is worse than material pride, pride of wealth, etc. Religious pride is the greatest obstacle to spiritual progress. *Be humble.*

PARABLE OF THE FIVE FOOLISH VIRGINS

The virgins went to meet the bridegroom. They all had lamps in their hands. Five of them had taken extra oil with them.

Five of them had not.

As they were waiting for the bride-groom, they slept. After a few hours, there was commotion; and the bride-groom was announced. The virgins woke up. The five that had extra oil were ready to go. The other five who had no extra oil said to the former five: "Please give us some of your oil; for our lamp is going out." But the five wise virgins refused, saying: "Then, we may not have enough for keeping even our lamps burning, till we reach him; you had better go the bazaar and get some oil for yourselves." The five wise virgins went to meet the bridegroom. The five foolish ones, went to the bazar to fetch oil. But before they could return, the door was closed and they could not enter and meet the bridegroom.

Similar is the case with the vigilant spiritual aspirant and the foolish man who indulges the senses. The former equips himself with the Four Means, acquires the wealth of God's Name and spiritual practices; and when the messengers of God come to take him away from this earth-plane, he is ready and fully equipped to meet the Lord. But the foolish sensuous

man wastes his life here, does not care to acquire spiritual wealth; and the lamp of his life goes out before he could make any progress towards the Lord. He returns to the bazar—to this world of birth and death.

We must be ever prepared. Live this moment as though it is our last moment on this earth and acquire the maximum spiritual wealth here and now.

PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS

A man went to his first son and said: "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." But the son answered "I will not", but later on he repented and went to work. Then he went to the second son and said the same thing. He readily said: "I will." But he did not go. Which of the two did the father's will? Surely, the former. So, the father was highly pleased with him.

It often happens like that in the world. God sends His Messengers to redeem mankind. They come and call out to the people to walk the path of righteousness and to return to God. The sinners at first refuse; but soon they realise their folly and quick-

ly return to the God-path. But the hypocrite readily agrees and promises; but does nothing more than lip-service to righteousness and divine life.

God is more pleased with even the sinner who, in the words of the Gita, resolves to turn to the path of divine life: the Lord promises, quickly he becomes a pure soul (*Kshipram Bhavati Dharmatma*) and attains to peace. The hypocrite who pretends to be righteous but who does not do the will of God, remains behind. *Let your action speak.*

The inexorable logic of life will grant no man a moment of real happiness, the spell of even a temporary peace, unless he reposes the centre of his soul upon the bosom of the Infinite called Christ, manifest in the life of Jesus, felt by the mystic-poets in all Nature, touched by emotion by every great devotee, comprehended by the gnostic beings, and popularly known as God. . . . The sceptic, the God-denier, the unbeliever, the the rake, the riotous soul, the sinful, the rationalist who would feel uncomfortable unless he answers the Sphinx of Existence, the artist who pursues the inaccessible Ideal in beauty, the

saint who aims at giving an absoluteness to his purity,—all, all have need of God, of inspiration from Christ, and would, one day or the other, find themselves surprised by an emotion of love something felt, something vaguely apprehended as a Presence, a Power that casts upon one an irresistible charm....all, all have need of God if existence has to hold a meaning, if joy is to be found in life, if a richness is to be added to oneself. Despite the deviation into spurious pleasures, that evil, wrong, and a hundred other forms of error and ignorance permit....the heart of Man shall find no satisfaction, no satiation, no ease, until it is what it is in the law of his being, the Godhead, the Divinity....This is one of the most powerful messages implicit alike in the teachings of Christ as in the teachings of Sivananda.

PARABLE OF THE IMPORTUNATE FRIEND

A man was asleep with his children. A friend of his was in urgent need of three loaves of bread to feed his guests. It was past midnight. The friend knocked at the door of the sleeping man. There was no answer at first; but he knocked again. He said: "Oh friend, kindly give me three loaves of bread. I have nothing

to feed my guests with." But the man within the house replied: "Do not bother me now. My children are sleeping with me; and it is pàst midnight." But the friend persisted and knocked again. And, the man had to get up and oblige the friend.

Even so one has to persevere in spiritual practices, in righteousness, in charity, in prayerfulness. There is an inexhaustible magazine of power within everyone; but this is asleep, as it were. The spiritual aspirant knocks at the door of this Power; he prays for three loaves of bread—Immortality, Eternal Bliss and Perennial Peace. At first it seems as though his prayer has fallen only on deaf ears. If he despairs then, and gives up his prayer, he will gain nothing. But the wise aspirant knocks again. There is a response from within as it were: but it is a negative one. His own evil tendencies, past evil deeds, and internal imperfections deny him the great gift of the Three Loaves. The man is not disheartened even then. He knocks again: he wins the prize. The Power is fully awakened and he gains when he sought after.

Ask. It will be given you. Seek. You will find. Knock. It will be opened to you.

PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP

A man had hundred sheep. He had taken them out for grazing. As he was returning, he found that one of them was missing. He immediately left the ninety-nine and ran searching for that missing sheep. He knew the ninety-nine would safely reach home. He found the missing sheep. H rejoiced and put it on his shoulders. As soon as he reached home, he called out to his neighbours: "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost."

Even so the man-of-God is intent on reforming the sinner and bringing him over to the path of divine life, though this means a lot of hard toil for him. He knows that those that are righteous will reach the Home—God—safely. When even one sinner is reclaimed, the gods and the Maharshis rejoice.

There is none, no man, or woman, however evil, sinful and abandoned, who is not in some corner of his, or her, being, splendidly good, and in some inmost and secret recess of his, or her,

consciousness, truly Divine, and in his or her awakened hours, fully aware that he, or she, had adopted wrong means to arrive at what is the legitimate right of his, or her, birth into the world, the right for Happiness, infinite Happiness, endless Happiness, for Freedom, infinite Freedom, endless Freedom, for Power, infinite Power, endless Power, for Love, infinite Love, endless Love, for Life, infinite Life, endless Life....And, so long as Man, or woman, is Man, or woman, he, or she, however supremely good, or extremely evil, would have moments in which he, or she, is bound to gaze on the luminous person of Jesus, or recollect calmly the sublimity and pertinence of his teaching, or derive from a thought devoted to Him or to His other Forms such as a Sivananda, a Buddha,....the needed inspiration.

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

A man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; to one he gave five talents, to another, two, to another, one, to each according to his ability.

After a long time, the master returned and wanted to settle the accounts. The

servant who receievd five talents had traded with them and made five more. He placed these ten before the master and explained what he had done. The master was highly pleased, and said: "Well done, a good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much: enter into the joy of your master." Similarly, the servant who had received two talents placed four before the master and received similar praise. But the servant to whom the master had given one talent returned it to him, saying that he knew the master was strict in his dealings and since he (the servant) did not want to lose the talent, he had hidden it safely away and brought it back now. The master was annoyed and said: "You wicked and slothful servant! You ought to have invested the money with the bankers." To others he said: "So, take the talent from him and give it to him who has ten. And, cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness."

The significance of this parable is obvious. By God's Grace man acquires a certain amount of piety, charitable disposition, spiritual leanings, etc. These virtues must be augmented by constant exer-

cise. Life, human birth, is a golden opportunity, to do so. He who thus augments virtue becomes the Lord's beloved and enjoys Bliss with Him in the Kingdom of Heaven. He who wastes this life, and does not make any use of his innate virtue, loses even that and comes to grief. *Be positively and vigorously good and righteous.*

Divine Providence, Dante points out, ordained man for two ends: blessedness of this life which consists in the exercise of one's natural powers, and is figured in the Earthly Paradise; and blessedness of life eternal which consists in the fruition of the Beatific Vision of the Celestial Paradise—God. It needs less than a little reflection to discern the direction in which the power laid in the teaching of Jesus and of Sivananda lead the soul of mankind: that power actively assists man achieve this twofold goal.

THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON

The younger son approached his father and said: "Father, give me here and now, my share of the property." And, as soon as the father had done so, the young man

went to a distant country. Soon the money was spent in luxury. A famine struck the country. The young man was very miserable. He thought of his father and said to himself: "I shall go to him and tell him —Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants." Even before he had reached his home his father had seen him from a distance. He rushed forward to embrace the son who pleaded to be treated as a hired servant. But the father had the best clothes brought for the son, all ornaments, and the best food. The return of the young man was celebrated as a festival. The elder son on returning home from the field was told of the festivity; he was angry. "Lo," he said "these many years I have served you; and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf! But the father replied: "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found."

This parable, too, has the same moral as the Parable of the Lost Sheep. The wicked man—his life and his energy are also the gift of God—squanders his life and his energy in evil ways. He comes to grief. Disease and old age assail him. Then he returns to God. The celestials and saints rejoice exceedingly when such a one returns to the path of righteousness: for, a wayward man has been reclaimed to the path of Truth.

When Christ ascended
Triumphantly from star to star
He left the gates of Heaven ajar.

In the lines above, drawn from his 'Golden Legend', Longfellow does not mean that Christ had literally ascended from one astronomical star to the other; it is symbolic of the ascension of the consciousness of Christ from one heavenly status to the other, from one manifestation of supreme moral excellence to the other, from one miraculous and beneficent deed in thought, in wisdom, in life, to the other, from one state of divine awareness to the other, until he approximated himself in the law of his being, in his intrinsic Nature to the Nature of the immortal and omnipresent Divinity, and by this very

gradation of ascension has left behind traces of his foot-prints that lead all humanity to its ultimate divine destination. The Heaven that Christ spoke of, and which Sivananda represented earlier as a condition of intensive divine awareness built up within the heart of man, is not to be confused with the kind of Heaven we find in the lines Milton dictated to his daughter:

> Heav'n by a Towered structure high,
> Where Scepture'd Angels held their residence,
> And sat as Princes.
>
> —*Paradise Lost,* Book I, 730.

PARABLE OF THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT

THE evil spirit leaves the house. It wanders through waterless regions. It finds no rest anywhere. It returns to the house again. In the meantime, the house had been swept clean! But, what does the evil spirit do? It goes out and brings seven other kindred spirits with it, to dwell in the house. Imagine the state of the house then! Is it not worse than it was before?

Even so: the evil nature of man temporarily leaves him some times. It is

starved out; association with the wise, precepts of sages, etc., prevent the evil from manifesting itself. These forces of the divine sweep the house (the heart of man) clean of all dirt and impurity. This does not last long, however! The evil nature returns. And, how? Often sevenfold.

Be eternally vigilant. Look out for the signs of the return of old evil nature. Nip it in the bud. You will then be safe.

—*Sivananda.*

As Jesus prayed, we find stated in St. Luke, 9, 29, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. This altered countenance, and this white glistening raiment is more than a rudimentary establishment of the kingdom of God on earth, and the manner in which Jesus prayed is the manner in which we are required to pray. And who can profess to be ignorant of, much less contend against, the extraordinary results such a prayer produces? Hereunder is given an eloquent passage of Sivananda pleading with every man to pray, pray on the Christmas Eve, the Eve that he would have us spread over the entire year, perceive in the perpetuated moments of

our exalted sentiments, heaven-ward feelings, find in our attitude, in our daily life, with the passage of every minute and moment.

BLESSED Self! On the eve of the Holy Christmas, kneel down and pray even as the wise men from the East prayed beside the Baby Jesus. That was the greatest message that Lord Jesus came amongst men to teach. The breath has been given to you by the Lord, to be spent in prayer. Kneel down and pray; but let the prayer not cease when you rise. Prayer should be life-long; and your life should be one long prayer.

There are no problems that cannot be dissolved by prayer: no suffering that cannot be allayed by prayer; no difficulties that cannot be surmounted by prayer; and no evil that cannot be overcome by prayer. Prayer is communion with the Divine. Prayer is the miracle by which God's Power flows into human veins. Therefore, kneel down and pray.

Greet the dawn of the day and bid adieu to the setting sun with a prayer of thankfulness: first, for a fresh day granted

and, last, for His Grace received. Thus shall your life be blessed and thus will you radiate His Blessings to all around you.

When the storms of war and unrest gather around you, kneel down and pray. Remember the words of Abraham Lincoln, the greatest architect of freedom. "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom and that of all about me, seemed insufficient for the day." When the wisdom of politicians and social leaders fails, kneel down and pray: for a pair of praying hands are mightier than rulers of state and winners of battle. At this critical hour in *human* history, it is prayer alone that can pave the way for peace. Naught else is of any avail.

When, within your bosom rage the storms of passion and anger, vanity and viciousness, kneel down and pray. For, the Lord and He alone hath power over the elements. In thy supplication is thy strength. You will be filled with His Blessings, protected by His Grace, shielded by His Mercy and spurred on the Path of Righteousness by His Divine Will.

Therefore, kneel down and pray. Not for earthly goods nor for heavenly pleasures, but, for His Grace. "Thy will be done, my Lord! I want nothing," shall be thy prayer. For you know not what is good for you, and you may be asking for trouble and praying for that which brings you a hundred limitations and as many worries. Pray for His Grace. Pray that His Righteousness might descend on the soul of all men. Pray that His Light might illumine the heart of all the leaders of men, and the path of humanity to peace. Kneel down and pray to our Saviour to save the world from its own misleading Forces, to bring into the world increasingly the reign of His Kingdom.

—*Sivananda.*

In his 'Ecce Homo', Sir J.R. Seeley records an excellent perception of the unusual excellence in the character of Christ, that is generally less perceived and easily forgotten, an excellence which the integral personality and the world-affirming yet wholly the other-worldly spirit of Sivananda display every day. Seeley notes that Christ "divides himself at once from the ascetic and the Stoic. They had said, 'Make yourselves

independent of bodily comforts'; he says, 'Ye have need of these things.' But if Epicureans or the sensualists take advantage of these words and say, 'If you have need of these things, make it your study to obtain them', he parts company not less decidedly with these, and says, 'True pleasure is not thus to be had. It is the healthy bloom of the spirit which must come naturally or not at all. Those who think about it lose it, or, if not produce with all their labour but a poor imitation of it. Self-consciousness and sensualism are the enemies of true delight. Solomon on his throne was gaudy; the lilies of the field are better drest. Epicurus in his garden was languid; the birds of the air have more enjoyment of their food.' "

How simple, glorious and grand is the life divine. Yet, "few there be that find it," says Lord Jesus. What we see around us today amply justifies this prophetic utterance of the Saviour. "*Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life*". The objects of the world which promise immediate sense-satisfaction and physical comfort are so tempting that man instinctively grabs at them. But they lead him to destruction—to the destruction of the one great gift of

the Lord that serves as the light of his life, viz., discrimination. It is discrimination that distinguishes man from animal. But by leading a sensual life he has degenerated into an animal. "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" How true! If the power of discrimination that the Lord has bestowed upod man be made to subserve the animal instincts of man, the craving for sense-pleasures, what wonder is there that he degenerates into something worse than even an animal? Lord Jesus warns: "No man can serve two masters: ye cannot serve God and mammon." Mammon promises immediate physical pleasure which lures man away, along the broadway towards destruction. "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" If man, the crown of God's creation, has lost his power of discrimination; if he, made in the image of God, chooses the path of evil, what will happen to civilisation, to humanity? He will lead the whole world to destruction.

—*Sivananda.*

Sivananda's writings have transformed and be-

come part and parcel of many lives, carry their own concrete appeal, and can be easily called quite scientific, as the type of results they produce in the natures and on the minds of men are capable of verification in other lives, and particularly are his writings so, when seen against the background of some of the existing philosophies whose content has always annoyingly eluded the grasp of practical life. As a man of transcendental experience, an experience lying beyond humanity's present powers of apprehension and possession, he seizes our attention only to force us into accepting him as a practical spiritual philosopher as contrasted with the academic philosopher who by the mazes of his abstractions, rules of Aristotle, and horrid Greek, tires us. It is not only as such a philosopher but also as one who had been adored as a Christ in himself, that Sivananda has portrayed for our edification something of the uniqueness of the phenomenon of Christ, and presented some of the important phases of the Message of the Saviour.

Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy. God is all-mercy. The life-giving warmth of the sun, the life-sustaining purity of fresh air, the sparkling water which quenches your thirst and makes

life possible, the good earth that yields nourishing food, besides providing you with a place to dwell—these constantly remind you that God is all-mercy. In order that you might evolve, He has given you a human birth and placed you in circumstances best suited to your temperament and calculated to accelerate your progress towards perfection. He gives you opportunities galore to exercise the divine qualities that are latent in you so that you can become perfect, even as He is Perfect. The beggar at your door, the orphan on the road, the naked, the unlettered, the hengry and the diseased children of God—they are there to provide you chances to exercise the divine mercy in you. Open your eyes and serve them. Clothe the naked; educate the unlettered; feed the hungry and heal the diseased ones. Thus would you grow in mercy. For, God is all-mercy. When you are merciful, you will obtain His Mercy. When you have His Mercy, you are blessed indeed: and you are a blessing to mankind, for, everyone who comes in ocntact with you will witness the miracle of His Mercy, healing, consoling, enlightening everyone and filling the world with the light of wisdom, peace and bliss. —*Sivananda.*

During the recent years, the vitality of Christianity has been, in a measure, undermined not by the aggressive self-defence of other world religions, but by anti-religious forces released into operation by such philosophies as of Marx, Lenin and Russell, by the Russian experiments in anti-religion, by the Turkish experiments in non-religion, and by the irreligiousness of the general Western life.... Who then in India, or in the whole of the world, as a matter of that, has been the best indirect defender of the central aspirations of the Christian Faith? Who, but Sivananda! The irresistible and boundless enthusiasm with which he carries on his mission of the dissemination of spiritual knowledge along lines most acceptable to the Modern Mood and Mind, his work of spreading the spirit of God and of Christ, in his own unique and powerful way, the demonstration in his own life, of the excellences typified in the living of Jesus, his world-status as the greatest sustainer of the living virtue around the world, of high spiritual wisdom wherever dynamically active,....constitute Sivananda into the best defender of the Power and Purposes of Religion, particularity of the non-organised and non-institutional Christianity and specially so because the great influence he wields outside India, is upon those that remain staunchly within the fold of

life possible, the good earth that yields nourishing food, besides providing you with a place to dwell—these constantly remind you that God is all-mercy. In order that you might evolve, He has given you a human birth and placed you in circumstances best suited to your temperament and calculated to accelerate your progress towards perfection. He gives you opportunities galore to exercise the divine qualilities that are latent in you so that you can become perfect, even as He is Perfect. The beggar at your door, the orphan on the road, the naked, the unlettered, the hengry and the diseased children of God—they are there to provide you chances to exercise the divine mercy in you. Open your eyes and serve them. Clothe the naked; educate the unlettered; feed the hungry and heal the diseased ones. Thus would you grow in mercy. For, God is all-mercy. When you are merciful, you will obtain His Mercy. When you have His Mercy, you are blessed indeed: and you are a blessing to mankind, for, everyone who comes in ocntact with you will witness the miracle of His Mercy, healing, consoling, enlightening everyone and filling the world with the light of wisdom, peace and bliss.

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the Christian faith. To every type of anti-religion and irreligion, Sivananda's conception of religion, and the exemplification in his own great life, of the immense importance and value of religion, form the best counter-forces, the best antidotes.

SELF-REALIZATION is the ultimate goal of religion; all the rest is only a preparation. The cosmic process of creation and dissolution through its scenes of appearance and disappearance, in the changing colours of life and death, drives home to mankind the lesson that this life is only an act in the process of *becoming*, where many parts are played by various individual entities, and yet no part by itself is complete and capable of giving the character of wholeness to this cosmic process. Religion is the means that binds man to the cosmic whole, and shows that he is a part of the whole, trying to abide by the law of the whole, and aiming at the fulfilment of the common purpose of the constituents of the whole.

Let it not be thought that religion is a dogmatic, other-worldly, pet tradition of believers or of irrational emotionalists. Religion is the most rational science of

the life itself, which no one can gainsay, the science of man as he essentially is, not merely as he presumes himself to be. Religion is the way to the realization of the highest perfection. If perfection is a possibility, religion is real and it is the only method befitting the hmuan ideal.

True, adherence to a particular creed or dogma can also be called practice of religion, but if it does not lead to harmonious self-development and realization of God, its purpose is fruitless. Religion is focussed into various practical modes which differ in accordance with the psychological constituents and the traditional and the cultural background of the individual. Yet, religion cannot merely be a set of opinions, dogmas and rituals, but life in the Eternal as its basic perspective. This perspective translated into practice leads one to the attainment of divine consciousness, freeing one from all limitations and imperfections.

Simple and practial religion is a life of righteousness, goodness, purity and selfless service. The pivot of religion is Truth or the Law of Eternal Virtue. Its precepts are: "Be good. Do good. Be

kind. Be pure. Be compassionate. Love all. Serve all. See God in all." Such a religion alone can awaken man to the consciousness of the unity of all existence and the realization of the Immanent Spirit, here and now.

Man can never live without God, for God is the Whole and man is only a part. Man's religion puts him in consonance with Truth. Religion is the form taken by the relation that exists between man and God, the link between the lower and the higher natures in oneself. Man's own higher Nature is God; his essence is the Real; his existence is universal and immortal. Religion is the way spiritual, the way to God. Religious life is spiritual life, a religious man is a spiritual man, for it is not possible to be religious without reverencing the Spirit that is one.

Philosophy has its root in the practical needs of man. Man wants to know about transcendental matters when he is in a reflective mood. There is an urge within him to know about the secret of death, the secret of immortality, the nature of the Soul, of the Creator, and of the world. Philosophy helps him to know

all these. Philosophy is the self-expression of the growing spirit of man. Philosophy is the rational aspect of religion. It is an integral part of religion. It is a rational inquiry into the nature of Reality. It gives clear solution to get rid of pain and death and attain immortality and eternal bliss.

Religion and philosophy are twin-sisters; the relationship between them is very intimate. Most of the problems of philosophy are the problems of religion. While philosophy struggles to gain an intellectual understanding of the real nature of the world, of man and of God, religion dynamically experiences the very Essence of all Existence. Philosophy is man's mental movement towards God or Truth or Reality, and religion is the movement of his heart and soul towards the same goal. Philosophy knows God; religion lives and moves in God. Philosophy is forever searching, inquiring, questioning: religion is sensing, realizing, experiencing.

—*Sivananda*

Mounted on three steps, the Calvary cross signifies Faith, Hope, and Charity; cross as the

crucifix bears an effigy of Christ crucified; cross as such is emblematic of Christianity; cross as a mystic symbol figures largely in many ancient religions. But, then, what precisely is the nature of the meaning Sivananda would have his Christian disciples read into, or read from, the Cross? The following passage contains the answer.

THE Cross has a unique position among Christian emblems. It is the sign of Christianity and stands as the most prominent ornament on the altars and fabrics of Churches. He who has control over flesh, who has crucified the flesh, who has subdued the life-passions, gained self-control, mortified the lower nature, can bear the Cross. It comforts, brings solace, heals the wounded hearts, and teaches the perfection of God, the nature of sin and the way of emancipation.

The Cross reminds us of the glory, the purity, the divinity, and the self-sacrificing spirit of the baby of Bethlehem, whose action is the mainspring of heroic efforts of self-conquest and self-sacrifice. The saints lived by the cross; it was their great book.

The Cross of Jesus will remain for ever the supreme example of love and suffering which returned no evil for evil. It symbolises a great principle of life; it is a classic instance of love resisting evil and overcoming it. When Lord Jesus was put to the Cross he said, "My Lord! They do not know what they are doing. Please forgive them." What a large heart and wonderful power of endurance Jesus had!

—*Sivananda.*

Christ's immortal eminence rests largely upon the Goodness of God, the nature of divine love, the forms of selfless service, the style of the action of wisdom, he revealed to all humanity. Christ bore in his brain a Knowledge beyond his years, brought into play in the deeds of his life a character wholly divine, displayed in the spirit of his living a structural perfection, showed in his manner something of the substance of Godhead....Wrapt in the Consciousness of God, Christ gave to the world the Light of the Heavenly Father that was lodged in him, distributed to all people a Peace that, in truth, passeth all understanding, and nothing on earth can buy....The enumeration of the excellences in Christ's own character, by Sivananda, will

stand undisputed, though the detracters on the greatness of Christ would refuse to see fully the force and the beauty of the character of Christ, and desire to concentrate upon that misunderstood side in the nature of Jesus which cursed the fig-tree, scourged the money-changers out of the Temple, called the Temple itself a den of thieves, tiraded against Scribes and Pharisees, militantly attacked the leaders of Jews, called them a generation of vipers and hypocrites, denounced the modes of Jewish worship, disregarded the authority of the Rabbis, claimed to be equal with God, and so on.... The Indian mind refuses to exaggerate the apparently negative side of the Character of Christ, and will instinctively include Christ in its own Pantheon, as one of the greatest Avatars, Incarnations of God, that demands from the devout the devotion of the whole heart, the sacrifice of the entire life, the pursuit of the Truth that Christ Himself is. Christ will yield his place as the greatest Prince of Peace, to none, and will remain to be adjudged by the impartiality of the most exacting reason, as the greatest embodiment of divine Love made manifest to all mankind.

CHRIST spoke such words which still elevate people; they still live as a foun-

tain of inspiration. In Jesus we see perfect holiness, goodness, kindness, mercy, gentleness, and justice. He is the embodiment of all that is best, sublime and most beautiful; he is the most perfect type and ideal of humanity.

Christ always practised what he preached; his life was itself an embodiment of his teachings; he is a philosopher, prophet, teacher, reformer. None can charge the thoughts he voiced with hypocrisy or deception; he risked his own life in uttering the truth. The spirit of Jesus is the spirit of Truth; he is called the Sun of righteousness. He said, "I am the Truth, the Way and the Life." He was God-man, the incarnation of God, and called himself the son of God.

The Heart of Christ is an extremely tender Heart. Jesus fed the starving people of the desert, restored the young son of the widow of Nair to life, stilled a raging storm when he was crossing the lake of Galilee, with his disciples in a small boat, walked on the sea to them when they were in danger, healed countless lepers and gave eyes to innumerable blind people. His miracles of healing were all acts of mercy.

Not the loftiness of the message he was born to deliver unto all humanity, through parable and through personality, nor yet the eloquent testimony against irreligious excesses of humanity he bore, nor such other features as these, but the identity Jesus reveals between himself and the Indian seer, when he matches the ecstatic declaration of the Indian, 'I am He', with his own compelling proclamation, 'I and my Father are one', and becomes like the Indian saint an all-adorable Idol of all common folk, and the other factors of this nature that arrest most the attention of the Indian mind, the Indian mind that finds in Him a Mirror to its own greatness, an object of its own adoration, a God of its own land, a spokesman of its own Wisdom, a distributor of the Goodness its own spiritual Heart holds, at once the Lord of the East and the West, at once the Deity of Christianity and of Hinduism, an Avatar like Krishna, like Rama, like Buddha, like other great and miracle-working Saints who are alive and active even today though deceased a thousand, a two thousand years ago.

PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE

"Kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and

covered up; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

This is a beautiful small parable pregnant with spiritual significance.

The Bliss of the Soul, the Peace that passeth understanding, is the hidden treasure. It is in the very innermost recesses of man's heart. It is revealed to man by the preceptor, the master, the Guru.

Overjoyed at this spiritual initiation by the Guru, the spiritual aspirant sells all that he has. He renounces the little pleasures of the world. But all the time he keeps the initiation well "covered": he does not boast about it and about the hidden treasure. He keeps silent; and works silently to possess it.

After renouncing the world and its petty joys, he purchases the field—spiritual life, divine life, service of the Guru and study of scriptures—and now he comes in possession of the hidden treasure, too.

PARABLE OF THE SEED AND THE HARVEST

"The Kingdom of God is as if a man

should scatter seed upon the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day; and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how. The earth produces of itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."—Mark 4:26-29.

All the actions of man are like the seeds sown; in the Kingdom of God they germinate and grow into plants; in due time they ripen and produce fruits; and when they are ripe, man harvests them in a subsequent birth. *As you sow so shall you reap.* Mysterious is the law of Karma. Or Man repeats the Names of the Lord. He meditates and engages himself in spiritual practices. His piety, righteousness and charity are the seeds that are sown in the Kingdom of God. In due time, they yield the delightful fruits of wisdom and God-realisation. The harvest is immortality and eternal bliss. The spiritual growth is not apparent; but the harvest is unmistakably evident.

CHRIST has something very illuminating to say in the practice of Truth. People generally swear that what they say

is the truth; and they swear that they would do certain things in the future. Lord Jesus asks His followers to abstain from swearing. Swearing springs from the self-arrogating ego. It is vanity. No one really knows the truth: but everyone is ready to swear "by God" that what he says is the truth. It is arrogant vehemence. A wise man would say: "To the best of my knowledge and belief, this is the truth." Only God knows what is truth. And, therefore, Lord Jesus says: *"Judge not others."*

The other form of swearing is to swear for the future. One can take resolves with a devout prayer. This is more like auto-suggestion. You may say: "Henceforth, I shall lead a life of abstinence, of celibacy or of renunciation: God, shower thy grace on me." This is necessary for spiritual progress. Similarly in the case of worldly dealings it is necessary to enter into some agreements and undertakings. But the most important point to bear in mind always—and this is the fundamental tenet of true religious life—is that the future is in His Hands. Our outlook upon the future ought to be one of surrender to the Divine Will. To pledge ourselves to certain vows is like a little boy promising his fond mo-

ther that he would "for ever and ever wear the beautiful coat" she presented him on his fifth birthday.

It is here that the greatest caution is needed. One should neither surrender to the evil forces of nature (Satan), nor should one develop religious arrogance. To lead an aimless life, taking things as they come along, reacting instinctively to surroundings and circumstances is sub-human. To arrogate to oneself the powers of doing or undoing things, of shaping his own and mankind's destinies, is surely more than an animal can do; but it is something *worse*—it is diabolical. The wise man, on the other hand, would look forward to something good, will aspire for something grand, will work for peace and prosperity, and then *leave everything to His Will. He* knows that by his own will, he cannot "make one hair white or black" on his own head!

This is the master-key to all progress. For thus recognising the inevitability of the Divine Will, man will march forward, with God enthroned forever in his heart, assimilating all that is good everywhere and during changing times, and transform-

ing all that is base and evil, by the touch of his godliness, forbearance and love. He will not be bound down by dogmas and "fixed" creeds and rituals, but he will be lifted up on the wings of God's Will and Grace.

—*Sivananda.*

A Wisdom transcribing itself in words of a hundred nuance of significance, a Wisdom sporting in Delight and replete with the Joy of Existence, a Wisdom full of the power of the all-embracing Love, a Wisdom that is the Light of the Consciousness shining in its, and through its, own substance and moulds, a Wisdom that makes no distinctions between Man and Woman but meets in both the same Heart, the throb of the same Life, the Soul of its own soul, the Self that is its own, that does not know how to distinguish between the Hindu and the Christian, differentiate the Christian from the Hindu, but that finds in both the same Lover of God, a single Person, a single object of joy, love and adoration, a Wisdom that does not know what sin is, and what Merit is, but finds Purity, total Purity, unsullied Purity in whatever it touches, on whomsoever its gaze alights, wherever its influence spreads, in all that it

meets,—this is Sivananda. When such a Wisdom seeks to depict Christ, it does it in a manner wholly worthy of the superhuman eminence that mantles the aureate Person of Christ, in a way that adds colour and meaning to what appears, even to the most devout heart, less colourful and less meaningful, raises the object of its portrayal into heights of the Beauty its own bosom bears and manifests in each of its manifold self-expression, and finds in Christ not a Person, a Man, a Form, a Father of a single religion, Christianity, but a Lord of the human heart wherever awake to the God-ward thought, a Presence that quickens the best of the spiritual susceptibilities in the soul of every man, a Beauty that impresses itself by the splendour of its beneficent deeds, the immortal power of its spoken words, the illustriousness of its manifest character, a civilizing Force, a thrilling Thing, an Agency that nurtures a Godhead in manhood, a Light that shines in the blazing noon, sees in the pitch darkness, illuminates thought, founds awareness wherever subsistent, awakens Consciousness wherever asleep, and sustains Life.

NEARLY two thousand years have passed since Lord Jesus, the Prophet of Palestine taught the way, the truth and the life

to mankind. The words of Jesus were not collected till some generations after they were uttered. Christianity was essentially a radiant way of life, a way of happy and victorious living in this world.

There is no record of the life of Jesus until he was fully grown up. He astonished people by his insight when discussing religion with the religious leaders of his day. For three years he explained his claim as the "Only Son of God" and taught people about the nature of his "Father" God, and the true paths of human life in the shape of Sermon on the Mount, etc. Jesus Christ has been called "The Great Exemplar". He explained the real nature of God, man and the world he lived in. He taught people to change their way of looking at things. He told them that if they would change their outlook on life from its materialistic to its spiritualistic aspect, they would realise that the world they were living in was God's Kingdom.

Christ has left no written records of his important teachings. He delivered all his teachings orally. Neither he, nor his followers ever wrote down even a single word which was spoken by him, in his life-time.

His words have been much misunderstood, wrongly annotated, mutilated, deformed and transformed and yet they have survived almost two thousand years as they were very powerful and came from the heart of a realised Yogi.

Here is the gist of Jesus' teachings: God is a Spirit. He is Omnipresent. He loves His creatures with infinite love. He is the Father of all. God is immanent in the world. He is transcendental also. He sent His son Jesus Christ unto the world to show them the way to attain immortality.

The theological doctrine of Jesus is belief in the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. In Godhead there are three Persons, viz., Father, Son and the Holy Ghost or Spirit. This is the Trinity of Christianity; all men are brothers, for they are all members of the family of God. If the teaching of Christ is carried out there will be no war. Here is his "Sermon on the Mount."

Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be

comforted. Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful· for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in hearts for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the sons of God.

—*Sivananda.*

Far from being less than rational, the Indian saints, if read in Sivananda's own life and mind, are so razor-edged in their heightened and sharpened reason that their thought cuts, not the passing and superficial foibles of human nature particularly in the higher strata of society and in circles distinctively intellectual and eminent, foibles that become delectable meet to cynics and worldly wits, not the common and understandable weaknesses of such persons that have attained to some particular eminence and established a reputation, weaknesses that are the concern of the critics who are incapable of any creative effort, and capable of functions peculiar only to a sensorious and not unperverse nature, but the very abscesses of phenomenal life, the maladies of existence that

soil with excessive misery the fair human face, the image of God. Pre-eminently, in the number of his passages, Christ himself evidences, this type of reason at its best, and as to what those passages are we would perhaps have an appropriate occasion to refer to, later; in the meanwhile, we will draw at random a few representative passages that while registering the extraordinary psychological insights Sivananda displays in leading, by spiritual disciplines, the human life into its divine altitudes, give us an adequate impression of the type of Surgeon of the Soul he is, the Surgeon who puts away the softness of his heart and lays his cutting reason, his uncompromising and hard disciplines, his axe upon the very roots of human limitations and raises Man into the status of the master of his own Mind, to the summit of Divinity. ... .

PHYSICAL freedom is no freedom at all. If you are easily carried away by surging emotions and impulses, if you are under the grip of moods, cravings and passions, how can you be really happy? You laugh for five minutes and weep for five hours. What can wife, sons, friends, fame and power do for you, when you are under the sway of the impulses of your mind? He is a true hero who has controlled his mind.

Conquest of the mind is the conquest of the entire world. True victory is over the mind: that is real Freedom. Thorough rigorous discipline and self-imposed restrictions will eventually eradicate all riotous thoughts, wild impulses, cravings and passions. One should take recourse to rigorous Sadhana and become a perfect Yogi.

You can bore a diamond with a bristle; you can tie an infatuated elephant with a slender silken thread. You can bring the sun down for the play of your child; you can make the flame of fire burn always downwards. But it is difficult to control the mind. For gaining mastery over the mind you have to know what it is, how it works, how it deceives you at every turn and by which methods it can be subdued. As long as the mind restlessly wanders about amidst objects, ever fluctuating, excited, agitated and uncontrolled, the true joy of the Self cannot be realised and enjoyed. To control the restless mind and still perfectly all thoughts and cravings is the greatest problem of man. If he has subjugated the mind he is the emperor of emperors.

One of the vexing paradoxes on the spiritual Path is that your mind is both

your best friend as also your bitter enemy. Mind becomes a true friend only after being gradually trained to be so. Until then it should be regarded as a troublesome and treacherous enemy inside us. It is extremely diplomatic, cunning and crooked. It is an arch-deceiver. One of the master-strokes of the mind's artfulness is to make the aspirant feel and smugly imagine that he knows his mind perfectly well and cannot be led away by it and at the same time to delude him totally.

Lust, anger and pride are the root of all human ills. They are the enemies of peace and are the parents of all the hosts of evils. Get up in the morning and meditate on the havoc that these three bring about in man's life. If you work yourself up to a feeling that they drain out your vitality—physical and mental—and that for your own good, you should eradicate them, then conquest of these three foes will be an easy affair. Victory over these three arch-enemies of man, is the greatest conquest.

Deep introspection alone can reveal a little of the mysterious workings of the mischievous mind. Probe and probe into the mind. Do not be lenient to the mind.

The mind will try to compromise with you. Relentlessly hunt out its hidden motives. Subject yourself to keen self-analysis everyday without fail. Oust all sentiment in this process. Become an intelligent, serious and earnest self-C.I.D. Carry on a ceaseless search and a vigorous enquiry inwardly. Pray for the Grace of God who alone can vanquish the mind and enable you to master it. Thus alone, through introspection, analysis, discrimination, vigilance and prayer can you understand the subtle jugglery of this wonderful thing called 'mind' and transcend its deceptions and its tricks.

The unerring Vision of India which has at its fingers' ends the secrets of the beginning and the end of all creation, of all formation and dissolution, of all finitization, liberates man into the illimitable possibilities of the play of the spiritual consciousness in its unwalled wideness, by disciplines that dissolve away the dissecting, dividing, finitizing, limiting, troublesome and treacherous human mind.

The mind has got a "drawing power": like attracts like, is a great cosmic law. You are continually attracting to yourself,

from both seen and unseen side of life-forces, thoughts and conditions most akin to those of your own. Every man has a mental world of his own, his own ideas, his own views, his own sentiments, his own feelings, his own habitual thoughts, his own experiences and his own modes of thinking and into these there constantly come similar ideas, similar views, similar thoughts and experiences.

The mind has the knack of making the unwary aspirant confidently think himself its master, while it makes a hopeless fool of him. Its deceptions are subtle. You have heard the saying, "The Devil can quote scriptures for its purpose." Similarly the mind can use a virtue to indulge in a vice. It has an inborn inclination to perversion. It can even take the support of a perfectly good principle seemingly to justify the most unprincipled sort of action. Unless it is scrutinised dispassionately its tricks are never fully discovered.

The workings of Maya through the complex mechanism of the human mind, are so very extremely subtle, so very difficult to overcome, and human nature is fundamentally so Asuric and unregenerate

that real spiritual development and progress in Sadhana are indeed very hard to obtain. To achieve success in any measure in the spiritual life is a very difficult and uphill task so much so that truly it is Divine Grace alone that can raise the aspirant from darkness to Light. So vehement, self-assertive and rebellious is the egoistic self of man that it refuses to be changed from its vicious state to a state of virtue, goodness and saintliness. It is a great blunder to think that the mere act of renunciation is a sufficient achievement in spiritual life. If renunciation makes you feel that you have at once become quite superior to the rest of mankind and that it has bestowed on you the right to preach and to dictate to others, then the very purpose of renuncitaion gets blasted. You destroy the very foundation of Spiritual Life by this egoistic assumption. The eradication of egoism in all its numerous aggressive forms comprises the very core of spiritual Sadhana.

Mind wants repetition of the pleasure once enjoyed. Memory of pleasure arises in the mind. Memory induces imagination and thinking. In this way attachment arises. Through repetition a habit is formed. Habit causes a strong Trishna. Mind then exercises its rule over poor, helpless, weak-

willed worldlings. As soon as discrimination arises, the power of mind becomes weakened. The mind tries to recede, to retrace its steps to its original home—the heart. Its poisonous fangs are extracted by discrimination. It gets dethroned. It cannot do anything in the presence of discrimination. The will becomes stronger and stronger when discrimination is awakened.

Mind works havoc through its power of imagination. Imaginary fears of various sorts, exaggeration, concoction, mental dramatization, building castles in the air, are all due to this power of imagination. Even a perfectly healthy man has some imaginary disease or other, created by this juggling power of the mind. Imaginary fears involve a tremendous loss of energy. Give up all forms of fear.

Do not try to drive away the unimportant and irrelevant thoughts. The more you try, the more they will return, the more they will gain strength. You will tax your energy and will. Become indifferent. Fill the mind with divine thoughts. They will gradually vanish.

Mind is directly influenced by the body.

Chemical components of different articles vibrate at varying rates. The intake of certain foods sets up discordant vibrations in the physical body. This throws the mind-stuff into a state of oscillation and disequilibrium. Concentration is disturbed. High thinking is rendered difficult, because elevating thoughts imply fine vibrations. The appetites of the physical are to be controlled, the nature of its food strictly regulated.

Perfection as Jesus would have us understand is a state of intensive consciousness transcending the conditions of mind—a state which galvanizing the Heart of a Prophet works miracles in the Service of Man, founds a New Religion, reveals in words, deeds and life the high Powers of God, a state which when awake in the geniuses of the world creates works of enduring beauty and civilizing power, and active in mystics articulates in ecstasy the Nature of the Infinite Beloved.

The mind can be annihilated either through the control of Prana, the Hatha-yogic method, or the arresting of the fluctuation of the mind, the Rajayogic method, *yogaschittavritti nirodhah,* of Maharshi Pa-

tanjali. Control of mind leads to stoppage of breath, and control of breath leads to stoppage of mind, because Prana and mind are under one Sambandha. During meditation the breathing becomes very slow. Those who practise meditation may be aware of this fact. This goes to show that when the mind is concentrated, Prana stops by itself without any effort.

There are five ways of effecting Manahkshaya or the destruction of the mind. Two are Yogic methods. Three ways concern Jnanayoga. *One,* when a thought arises, drive it out. Say unto yourself, *"neti, neti* —not this thought, not this thought; I do not want this thought." *Two*, Pratipaksha-bhavana—substitute a counter-idea, love for hatred, courage for fear, and so on. *Three,* have Brahma-bhavana. All Sankalpas will die. *Four,* be a Sakshi of the mind. Be indifferent, *udasina. Five,* make the enquiry, 'Who am I?' constantly. All thoughts will die. This is easier and more effective than the *neti, neti* and the *Pratipaksha-bhavana* methods.

—*Sivananda*

Christ is but a Mood of transcendental Greatness, an attitude of the soul of Sweetness, a condition

of divine realization, a state of Heavenly Perfection active on earth, and wrestling against human injustice, error, ignorance, weakness, misdeeds; Christ is but a Divine Heart making transforming, endearing, delightful gestures of never-ending, ever enduring, unquestioning, all-forgiving, all-including Love....Carrying his powers of self-expression in Sanskrit poetization, to almost a perfect perfection, Swami Jnanananda, the Head of the Department of Sanskrit, of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy, of Swami Sivananda, invokes in the tongue of the Gods, by praise and by a praying spirit, the Spirit of Christ to bestow continued benefits upon all mankind. Freely rendered into English, his excellent Sanskrit stanza on Christ reads thus: 'May the Light of the world, irradiant with extraordinary excellences and evocative of the highest reverence, the Light that wrought wondrous works and articulated more wondrous words of eternal wisdom, the Light that commanded divine powers, demanded divine love, dispelled the darkness of human ignorance around the world, and gave itself to the morally conscious humanity as the source and centre of every conceivable Virtue, the Light that is Jesus the Christ emergent from the Heart of the Infinite Reality of the Nature of Existence-Knowledge-Delight, bestow continued benefits and welfare upon all mankind.' Here it is

in keeping with the spirit of the book to consider the nature of the soul of poetic language as discerned by the Hindu rhetoricians, and its worthiness by varied virtue and advantage, to delineate the character, and praise effectively, significantly, the supernal greatness, of Christ....

The Hindu rhetoricians have discerned the soul of poetic language as a derivative from the dynamisms of emotion, emotion being a complex condition of consciousness in which the implicit phenomenon formed of intelligence and feeling in their synthetical interaction, is cast into an explicit radiant glow, a glow which is capable within the vertical expanses of human experience, of darting the tongues of its gathered and rising flame to the skies or manifesting itself in an infinite qualitative variety, of which the range of nine *rasas*, is treated by the subtle insight of Indian aesthetical doctrines, as fundamental. But whatever may be the nature and intensity of the internal emotion or passion or inspiration, it must bear or be furnished with, a power to determine for itself a compelling utterance, an expression of the content of its thought universalised by an artistic vision, in constructive beauty with which

charm and delight co-exist, so that it may rise to the academic dignity of a standard poetic literary form, ensure an instantaneous appeal and a meaning for the general reader, and afford an enduring many-sided interest to the tastes of the cultivated. Therefore, poetry as a channel effectively communicative of the fire of inspired or interesting or instructive emotion, idea, suggestion, requisitions the services both of a conatively impersonalising vision and the imaginatively impressive acts of speech and obtains half-deliberately or wholly under some inner compulsion, the effect of a heightened and exalted mode of expression. The charms of metrical patterns, the excellencies of rhyme schemes evolved through the ages by the genius of poetic spirit, have been, especially by the *Vakrokti* school of Kuntala in the realm of Indian poetics, deemed to be very essential instruments for adding outward grace to the sense in the sound of the verses, for echoing a satisfying delight into the ears, and help swaying and modifying the affections of the reader.

From the musical resources of sound, poetry acquires its vital, telling forms, and seeks and finds its substance and soul in the subtle rhythms of an emotion, of a

grand imagination, of a splendid vision, of a felt experience; in the mind of a poet, not unoften, a poem begins as a kind of cadence, as music of a sense or a sight or a song without words and gradually dons the garb of syllables and significance. No one would disagree on so common a fact of experience, that the melodic quality of human voice, the cadences of a language, evoke our first automatic response and arrest our attention even when we fail to make any sense of what is sounded and transmitted; there is no contending the fact that the spontaneous exuberance of Shakespearean verse, a rich and rhythmical flow of words, exercise on us a decisively enchanting influence, a kind of hypnotic power; such devices of poetry as simile and metaphor greatly increase the intensity of the suggestions of character made; alliteration and assonance carry a magical effect all their own; certain rhythms mean more than the language; the manner of saying may reveal half the meaning and Truth itself shines brighter in verse. And, no ancient language yet living, has made so perfect a science of sound and so fully exploited not only all its amazing verbal and musical possibilities but also is psychological and spiritual capacities, as the most

magnificent Sanskrit tongue, popularly recognised as the language of Gods; and it is through this highly impassioned, concentrated and condensed language of revelatory poetic power and beauty, of potent pragmatic spiritual rhythmic enunciation, *mantra*, this medium, that the Swami has above given us that poetic praise, and invocation, of the Spirit of the Christ. Whether with the ancient Hindus or with the ancient Greeks, poetic experience, exercise and expression were functions of the religious spirit and mood; the elevated and musical language of poetry was the worthy and noblest medium of expression for inspired vision and wonder, for the manifestation of devotion and for utterance of prayer. The world would be delighted, then, sooner or later, to receive from the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy of Sivananda, an inspiring biographical wo rk on Jesus of Nazareth , breathed into the rhythms and cadences of Sanskrit.

—*Omkarananda*

Reformulating afresh the fundamental principles of a truly Christian life, Sivananda makes an impressive effort at conveying into our lives

the Light of Jesus the Christ. In the process, he transmits to us a very intimate and urgently needed personal message.

The light of Jesus Christ glows within the hearts of all. Some are aware of its presence, and, with its help, attain to the state of blessedness by enblossoming in their lives the ideals of the Blessed Lord. Some yet are unaware of the presence of this spiritual light within, because it is shielded by their egotism and impurities of their minds. But the light is there, all the same, and no one is denied the hope of redemption.

The light of Jesus is the light of the conscience of humanity. It is the light of the highest spiritual idealism. The Christ does not belong to the Christians alone; his is the universal spirit, denying itself to none; his is the gospel of all humankind.

Truth is always very simple; it needs no complicated enunciation; it calls for no metaphysical confusion. Empty yourself, and you shall know the truth; seek, and you shall find; serve, and you shall be purified; give, and you shall be enriched; love,

and you shall be fulfilled; aspire, and you shall attain.

It is mainly in the simplicity of life, innocence of heart, humility of spirit and purity of aspiration that you can find the true Jesus within you. You can feel him better in the sighs of the lowly and in the eyes of the suffering, than in the splendour inside a church. You can hear his voice in the murmurings of the brooks, in the whispers of the woods, in the stillness of the night. You can feel his presence in the innocent smile of a baby, in the mother's sense of oneness with her first-born infant.

Life, as it is, would have far less complication, if only everyone would think a little less of one's little self. This spirit of self-abnegation, of losing oneself in giving for the sake of others, of innate forgiveness and compassion, great tolerance and tenderness of feeling, that constitute the striking contours of the personality of the Good Shepherd.

A little charity of heart, a little of self-denial, a little helpfulness and understanding, can bring about so much of well-being in oneself and in others. A little

devotion to the Lord and trust in Him can fill one with so much of peace. A little purity of mind and aspiration to lead a better life can give one so much of inner fulfilment.

The hovering spirit of Christ is ever ready to come into the aid of man, if only he would open himself unto it. All problems of life set in when one shuts oneself out and does nothing but stonewalling. Selfishness and spirituality can never live together. The good graces in life and material welfare turn into dross if they are meant for exclusive possession. In relieving the suffering of others one relieves the suffering of oneself.

Let us all endeavour our best to come closer to the spirit of Jesus Christ, cherish it with ardour, faith and devotion, and strive, with renewed zeal, to live in the light of his teachings and spread his universal message all around.

—*Sivananda.*

The loftiness of the principles that govern the inner disposition and overt tendencies of a

life, account for the greatness of that life. For Sivananda, life has held wholly divine lessons, shown superhuman perspectives, discloses a Godhead wherever his gaze alights. Scanning Sivananda Literature for the elements that explain the nature of the art of Sivananda's own life, we find the following passages written in the first person singular.

Not by mere argument or discussion can religion be taught or understood. Not by precepts or canons of teaching alone can you make one religious. It requires a peculiar at-one-ment with one's vast environment, an ability to feel the deepest as well as the vastest, and a genuine sympathy with the creation. Religion is *living,* not speaking or showing. I hold that whatever be one's religion, whoever be the prophet adored, whichever be the language or the country, whatever be one's age or cultural background, one can be religious, provided the true implication of that hallowed term, *tapas,* which essentially means any form of self-control, is brought into practice in daily life to the extent possible for one in the environment and under the circumstances in which one is placed.

I hold that real religion is the religion of the heart. The heart must be purified. first. Truth, love and purity are the basis of real religion. Control over the baser nature, conquest of the mind, cultivation of virtues, service of humanity, goodwill, fellowship and amity, constitute the fundamentals of true religion. These ideals are included in the principles of the Divine Life Society, and I try to teach them mostly by example, which I consider to be weightier than all precepts.

The modern thinker has neither the time nor the patience to perform rigorous *tapas* or austere religious practices; and many of these are even being relegated to the level of superstition. In order to give the present generation the benefit of real *tapas* in the true religious sense, to reveal to them its real significance and to convince them of its meaning and efficacy, I held up the torch of Divine Life, which is a system of religious life suited to one and all, which can be practised by the recluse and the householder alike, and which is intelligible to the scholar and the rustic as well, in its different stages and phases.

This is a religion which is not other

than what is essential to give meaning to the daily duties of the human being. The significance of Divine Life is in its simplicity and applicability to the everyday affairs of the ordinary man. It is immaterial whether one goes to the church or the mosque or to the temple for offering one's prayers, since all prayers are heard by the One.

The average seeker after Truth is often deceived by the caprices of his mind. A person who takes to the spiritual path is bewildered before he progresses well on his journey, and is naturally tempted to relax his efforts half-way. Many are the pitfalls, but those who plod on steadily are sure to reach the goal of life, which is universality of being, knowledge and bliss. I have laid great emphasis in all my writings upon the discipline of the outgoing senses, conquest of the mind, purification of the heart, and attainment of inner peace and strength, as suited to the different stages in evolution.

The acquisition of a superior power to deal with every difficult situation and each trying condition or vexing problem of life, and the possession

of a composure almost comparable to inanimate nature, seem to be the two immediate results of the action of the power of Sivananda's message.

I have learnt that it is the foremost duty of man to learn to *give*—give in charity, give in plenty, give with love, give without any expectation of consequence (a charitable mental disposition and forgiveness are also 'giving'), because one does not lose anything by giving, but, on the other hand, the giver is given back manyfold. That is the secret of the progress of my Mission. Charity is not merely an act of offering certain material goods, for charity is incomplete without charity of disposition, charity of feeling, charity of understanding and appraisal and attitude to others. *Charity is self-sacrifice in different levels of one's being, without the vanity of self-sacrifice.* Charity, in the highest sense, I understand to be equivalent to *jnana-yajna* ('sacrifice' of sacred knowledge).

Similarly, I consider goodness of being and doing constitutes the rock-bottom of one's life. By goodness I mean the capacity to feel with others, and live and feel

without coming in the way of others, and be in a position to act in a way that no one is hurt by one's action and here we must know that even a thought or a gesture constitutes an action. I think that to be good in reality, in the innermost recesses of one's heart, is not at all easy, though it may appear to be simple as a teaching. It is one of the hardest of things on earth, if only one would be honest to oneself.

There is no physical world for me. What I see, I behold as the glorious manifestation of God. I rejoice when I behold the Reality with "thousands of heads and thousands of eyes and feet" (*sahasrasirsha purusha*). When I serve the people, I see not the people but Him, of whom they are the limbs. I learn to be humble before the Mighty Being whose breath we breathe and whose joy we enjoy. I do not think there is anything more to teach or to learn. Here is the cream of religion, the quintessence of philosophy, that which anyone really needs.

The philosophy I hold is neither a dreamy, subjective, world-negating doctrine of illusion, nor a crude, world-affirming theory of sense-ridden, limited huma-

nism. It is the fact of the divinity of the universe, the immortality of the soul of man, and the unity of creation with the Absolute, that I feel as the only doctrine deserving the highest consideration. The one Reality appears as the diversified universe in all the planes of its manifestation, and, therefore, the aspirant has to pay his homage to the lower manifestations before he steps into the higher.

Sound health, clear understanding, profound knowledge, a powerful will and moral integrity are all necessary parts of the process of the realization of the ideal of humanity as a whole. To adjust, adapt and accommodate, to see good in everything, to try to transmute evil into good, and bring into effective use all the principles of nature in the process of evolution towards Self-realization along the path of an integrated adjustment of the human powers and faculties, are some of the main factors that go to build up a true philosophy of life.

For me philosophy is not merely a love of wisdom but *vital experience and lively possession of it.* In all my writings I have prescribed methods for overcoming and

mastering the physical, the vital, the mental and the intellectual layers of consciousness, in order to be able to proceed with the *sadhana* for self-perfection. The self-perfected ones are the *sarva-bhuta-hite ratah* (intent upon the well-being of all beings).

To behold God in every name and form, to feel Him everywhere, at all times, and in all conditions of life, to see, hear, taste and feel everything as the divine, is my creed. To live in God, to melt and to lose myself in Him, is my creed. By dwelling in such union, to utilize the hands, the mind, the senses and the body for the service of humanity, for singing the names of the Lord, for elevating the devotees, for giving instructions to sincere aspirants and disseminating spiritual knowledge throughout the world, is my creed, should you like to call it one.

To be a cosmic friend and a benefactor, a brother of the poor, the forlorn, the helpless and the fallen, is my creed. It is my sacred creed to serve sick persons, to nurse them with care, sympathy and love, to cheer the depressed, to infuse power and joy in all, to feel oneness with each

and everyone, and to treat all with understanding and kindness. In my creed there are neither peasants nor capitalists, neither beggars nor emperors, neither males nor females, neither teachers nor students. I love to live, move and have my being in this realm of integral oneness with all.

The first step is often the most difficult one. But once it is taken the rest becomes easy. There is a need for more of courage and patience on the part of the people. One usually hesitates and is frightened. All this is due to the ignorance of one's true duty. A certain amount of education and culture is necessary to have a sufficiently clear grasp of one's position in this world. Spiritual education alone can meet this need. Success is difficult in any undertaking without mutual help. The head and heart should go hand in hand, and the idealistic and the practical aspects should have real integration. To work with this knowledge is Karma-Yoga. The Lord has declared this truth in the *Bhagavadgita*. I pray that this great ideal be actualized in the daily life of every individual. This is not merely a wish; this is a possibility and a fact that cannot be gainsaid.

This is to be realized, if life is to mean what it ought really to mean.

—*Sivananda.*

Almost a real Christian conception of culture emerges from the pictures of the patterns of the meaning of culture Sivananda makes.

The gospel of life, is a gospel of non-attachment, of the immortality of the soul, of the ultimate liberation of the soul in the Cosmic. This is the teaching of the all-inclusive inwardness of existence. The indispensability of non-attachment becomes obvious from the concept of the oneness of life, of the unity of the universe. If truth is one, attachment to outward forms is another name for clinging to phenomena and a breach of truth, the inevitable result of which is misery. Culture tends to freedom, and freedom is only in non-personal life.

Unselfishness and inward peace, or at least an effort to achieve this end, should mark the distinctive feature of culture if it should last, and have any permanent significance. Knowledge which characterizes

such culture is not mere learning but faith and insight, with an ethical background. This is not possible without freedom of the mind from prejudice and from craving for things that perish.

Culture is synonymous with the blossoming of the faculty of the spiritual consciousness in different degrees, and by stages. Higher than the animal man is the normal man. Higher than the normal man is the good man. Higher still is the saintly man. But, above all, is the divine man or God-man.

To act without attachment, to perform without reluctance one's duties according to the station in which one is placed in society by one's capacity and aptitude and destiny, and to be inwardly unified with the Divine Being, even while devoted to a household life, is what constitutes the way to peace. The *'sthitaprajna'* of the *Bhagavadgita* is the Indian ideal of the highest type of culture.

In a general sense, culture includes such processes as bodily training, the discipline of the psychological faculties, the development of the consciousness of right and

wrong and good and bad, *etc.,* which go by the names of physical culture, mental or intellectual culture, will-culture, memory-culture, thought-culture, moral and ethical culture, and the like. For culture is a progressive transfiguration of nature, a creative activity of the evolving mind of man to approximate itself to perfection, so far as it is possible for it with the knowledge and energy with which it is endowed at a given level of life.

Christ is but the Heart of the Divine applying to all humanity, the touches of a powerful spirituality, a manifestation of the Energy of Godhead urging everyman to abide by the highest standards human conduct can attain, a Virtue clothed in a hallowed Name, a Light giving itself through the luminous confines of an endearing human Form and Life, and through a great moral message and higher wisdom of living.

The individual is neither a body merely, nor only a mind. The human individual, at least, is a composite structure, a complex of physical forces, vital urges, emotional

stresses, moral aspirations and rational needs. Nothing that does not comprehend these in its compass or contribute to the training and development of these aspects can be called an integral culture.

Culture is the reflection of the soul in man, and it is complete in proportion as it answers to the original, *viz.*, internal perfection. Pure thought, decent speech, nobility of character, impartial love, truthfulness, honesty, straightforwardness, forbearance—such virtues as these are, therefore, the natural insignia of right culture, which can be regarded as an index of self-fulfilment.

According to Patanjali, perfection is a state that can be reached by Yoga steps —harmony in the body (*asana*: bodily perfection), harmony in the vital forces (*pranayama*), harmony in the senses (*pratyahara*), and harmony in the mind (*samyama*), which, to realize fully, has to be extended to family, society, nation and the world at large. All this is rooted in ethical discipline (*yama-niyama*). Here we have a statement of the highest conception of culture, and anything else that we say in this regard is only a commentary

on this inviolable truth of the very profound relation between man and world, and man and God.

True culture is inconceivable without a definite aim of life. Hindu scriptures speak of four aims—*dharma, artha, kama* and *moksha*—referring to the moral, economic, vital and spiritual values that govern our very existence every moment. Here is a complete scheme of life, the anatomy of the background of a real and permanent culture.

The genius of life in every son of Adam, with its active energy is ever striving to rise above all limitations, crush and conquer all opposing forces, solve the riddles of the Sphinx of the inner Self, pervade through and through everything, and assert its suzerainty over all earthly kingdoms and solar spheres. It is in this innate dynamic tendency of life to unfold infinite gifts, faculties and powers, to lengthen deepen, broaden, itself, to know and be itself, that the supreme value of life lies. Again, in other words, the stress and strain of human life, the intense struggle of individuals in the daily battle of life in this world of limitations, illustrates, albeit in a crude, inadequate and

imperceptible manner, the intrinsic urge in man to outgrow his shortcomings, to excel his own nature, to transcend his own self, and to exist as the invincible and all-governing Supreme Being. Man has not learnt to seek the aid of the light of culture as a guide to this urge: hence, the comedy and the tragedy of life, its chaos and crisis.

The principle of *rita* and *satya* (both terms meaning 'truth'), as enunciated in the *Rig-Veda,* should be enough to enable us to mould ourselves into any pattern of culture. For *rita* is the unalterable law of the unity of the cosmos, and *satya* is its relative manifestation in life, which takes into consideration the evolutionary structure of creation and the law of action and reaction that regulates it.

The range of this *satya* as the determining power in creation is wide enough to include all the laws of the world. In the moral realm it can be crystallized into the 'categorical imperative' of the five *yamas* or 'restraints' (*vide*: Patanjali's *Yoga-sutras*).

But, then, culture is far from being a mere

reconciliation of external forces, the result of a check on the outward behaviour, a superficial refinement of manners, a putting on of appearances. That kind of surface polish would never gain for us any enlightenment worth the name, any insight into the mysteries of life. Culture is a supreme art of life, the technique of self-sculpture, a way of tiding over the defects that eat the very vitals of our life, if not the beauty of our soul, a scientific living of disciplines and growth: it is an integration of being, a steady evolution into our real Self, into Godhead itself; only, it enables us to do all this even while in the busy world of work and strife, and not necessarily in the imaginary safety of the solitude of mountain caves. Science, of which great expectations were entertained in the initial stages of its growth and development, has not come to our rescue: on the other hand, it is acting as an adverse force that wrests and distorts our innate urge for final perfection, and heading us towards a wreck. We must admit that, in spite of its glorified achievements and of the much vaunted progress in our civilization and culture, we are crude and coarse, in reality, we lack the radiant gladness and fullness of life, we are steadily drifting away from the essentials, and, hence, from the universal which is the sap of life and the essence of all existence.

Culture is not diplomatic tactics, shrewdness to put on appearances, or ability to be one thing inside and another outside, in order to suit one's convenience. Culture in not opportunism, weather-cock behaviour, or any kind of refined hypocrisy. Culture is not merely confined in dress, food, gait, gesture, or knowledge of arts, sciences and languages, though these may receive some impact of good taste due to habits engendered by inward regeneration, which is the mark of culture.

Culture is not affectedness of any sort, nor superiority-complex of any kind; for culture is *normal life*. Culture is not also just literature, music and dancing, or sculpture, architecture, painting or drawing, or psychology or mathematics. It is not either the scientific advancement spectacular in the West, not success in taking off from the pull of the earth's gravity, or going into solar orbit, nor the so-called control over nature that we hear so much today, for no control is complete or meaningful without control over oneself.

The basic reason for all the fissures in life lies in our failure to base our lives on religious

culture, which gives us a proper sense of spiritual and, therefore, of fundamental values, and supplies us with a vision by which to live a full life of freedom and happiness in the vastness of the Spirit, a true life in the very heart of the universe.

Culture may include science, art and literature, but it cannot be replaced by these in entirety. Culture is not what is implied these days by the much abused slogan: "rule of the people, by the people, for the people," for culture cannot dispense with Truth, which cannot be identified with the group called "the people," though its common utility is of vital importance. Truth is not a matter of votes by the majority. Truth is not any one stage, or even a few stages, but includes all stages at every stage. Every situation is a universal situation. Here lies the profundity of culture, and this ensures its permanency.

We hear so much about the ancient culture of India. And what are the characteristics of this culture? We know that almost every country in the world thinks in terms of power and pelf,

while we in India are taught to give more stress on the principles of right morality, and evaluate life in the light of the reality of a universal Spirit existing behind all things. Unselfishness and self-abnegation are placed first, and then the activities of life follow.

We are passing through critical moments in the history of human life: the magnitude of our misery is steadily on the increase. As long as we do not aim at an internal transformation through a weeding out of the undesirable elements and effect individual regeneration through a steady development of the innate goodness latent in every heart, we cannot hope to escape the impending dangers arising out of our ignorance. The highest spiritual consciousness, which is the heritage of every man, abhors all isolation of his existence, assailed, as it is, by all manner of absurdities, in this imperfect world. It is culture, self-sculpture alone that can soothe and satisfy the spirit in him, by helping him to dissolve his selfish interests, to transmute his disastrous passions, to conquer fear and death, to chisel his coarse personality into the typical image of the self-effulgent Beauty of the Supreme Being which God is, and give him the light of

Truth to live an inner life, the perfect life of transcendent majesty.

The system of education, the concept of values, the rules of society, the aim of politics, the laws of the country, are all emanations from this comprehensive idea of the purpose of existence, which manifests itself in the endeavours for *dharma, artha, kama* and *moksha*—a technique of living an integrated life in every sphere of human activity. There is a spiritual psychology behind education and life.

If we take this pattern of culture as a standard, it follows that the essence of true culture is in its being based on a spiritual sense of values and an integral outlook of life. The assertion of the divinity of man is its heart, and it rests on inner refinement, on the nurture and unfoldment of the spiritual spark in man. Right aspiration is the longing for *atma-swarajya* or freedom in the universality of the Self, attainable through the conquest of the internal and the external nature. Self-realization becomes the goal.

—*Sivananda*

If man were Ceaser alone, Plato would belie it; if he were Aristotle alone, Christ would disprove it. What is he, this arrogant soul that looks askance at Alaxanders and Bethovens, Kants and Shakespeares, and finds no interest, no worth or excellence in the unequalled geniuses of this good earth! The reason for this attitude of his, is apparently occult, lies in that which is to be discerned by exercise of much thought. Deeply rooted in the Power of Powers that animates all the universes, nurtured in the Nature's amphitheatre, man alone, of all creatures, great and small, enshrines a deathless flame of yearning in his bosom, to be infinite in all dimensions of his being; and so he disdains all partial geniuses cribbed, cabined and confined in regional development and in sordid weaknesses and limitations of mortal existence. Nothing is so marvelous, so mysterious as the soul of man that aspires to be as perfect as its Father in Heaven, and more. The phenomenon of the Jesus the Christ is at once the reality, and the fulfilment, of this yearning, this urge, this aspiration, this need for self-transcendence into Divinity and a spread therefrom of the Divine Love, Service and Beneficence to all mankind.

JESUS was the first, in Hebrew world,

to bring a healthier and more rational concept of God. The Jews believed that God had agreed to bargain with Father Abraham, deciding their fate arbitrarily and yet reserving special privileges for them over other tribesmen in His own kingdom. This idea was revolting to Christ, and he boldly spoke out that God had nothing to do with one man's comfort and another's suffering, that He was a loving Father to all mankind, claiming no favourites absolutely: impartial, kind and merciful, and knowable through the cleansing of the human nature.

Christ constitutes in himself the example 'par excellence' of the truly religious genius. The unusual qualifications requisite for the founding of a new and vigorous faith, were exemplified by the life of Jesus, and consist primarily in the originality in the nuance of thought and the style of action, to which his soul tended, in the domination of his mood by a tendency to defy all ostentation, and interpret the Law in startlingly new ways, to exalt everyman out of earthliness and spiritualise all life, to oppose all ceremonial tyrrany and everything that stifles the spirit of real spiritual unfoldment, to bear

an eloquent testimony against the irreligious excesses of an erring humanity, to display a loveliness of disposition under the worst of conditions, a penetrating intelligence at every turn, an indomitable will in each of his deeds, a boundless faith in the Kingdom of Heaven which he held in his own palm......

In Palestine, when Jesus lived, tribal loyalties and distinctions were rigidly observed, and, as is the case even in our own time, one race looked upon another with contempt and despise and tried to glorify themselves above all. Jesus could not bear this and sought to break up all differentiation through the gospel of universal brotherhood and all-inclusive love. This was one of the reasons, together with his unchangeable conviction in the common fatherhood of God, that outraged the sectarian patriotic fervour of his own people and the preferential, divine hierarchy of the priestcraft. He could neither reconcile himself that there were to be accumulated private property, reserved considerations, justification of earthly pride, or for indiscriminate satiation of base impulses, continuation of traditional habits which sought to set up barriers between

men, and atonement for one's misdeeds through monetary dividends. What was the result? Jesus had to be a martyr.

Yet another eternally inspiring lesson implicitly conveyed to the intelligence of all mankind, by the life of Jesus is that all beings however low in evolution, all actions however trivial in their nature, all things however lifeless they may appear to be, bear the stamp of the Heavenly Perfection; the dance of the Principle of the Beautiful is ceaselessly operative in all of them, and they that own the wondering eyes and the innocent heart of a child perceive the splendour of the Truth shining equally in all creation—in the man toiling in the field, in the birds of the air, and the beasts of the forest, in the blossoms of the garden, in the waves of the sea.

The religion of the Messiah was the religion of heart, built on the edifice of love. He said that the kingdom of God was not to be found in this material world of fraud and deceit but in the hearts of good people who had transformed their lower nature. Thus, first of all, Jesus ad-

vocated an inner purification and he aplied this doctrine on a social basis through his commandments in which he asked not to be promiscuous, not to steel, not to kill, not to bear false witness, not to hate and cavil, and not to defraud. But he went further and said if one really wanted to enter the kingdom of God, he had to renounce earthly riches and vanities. So strong was his reaction to the privileged wealthy class, knowing fully well how corrupting was the influence of gold, that he proclaimed, 'It is easier for a camel to enter the eye of a needle than for the rich man to enter into the kingdom of God,' and to a seeker who wanted to inherit the eternal life, he said, 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon; for either ye will hate one and love the other, or else ye will hold to the one and despise the other. Renounce everything, take the cross and follow me.'

Christ had an immense conviction about the sacredness of what he taught, emphatic as he was in his Sermon on the Mount that 'Blessed are they that hungered and thirsted after righteousness, for they shall be filled; blessed are the merciful, for they shall be filled; blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy; blessed are

the pure in heart, for they shall see God; and blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the sons of God.'

He believed in the law of Cause and Effect, for he remarked 'Whatever man soweth that shall he also reap.' Many have wrongly accused him of being unduly exuberant in his promises for a future blessedness in heaven. On the contrary, he concerned himself more with the present than with the distant future, since he asked people to live the day well in goodness and in the service of God, and 'take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.'

Every speck of space in which we draw our daily breath, our hourly breath, our every second breath, is rich with the inexhaustible abundance of Goodness, of Godliness, of Beauty. One has to widen one's conciousness and deepen one's spirit to be able to develope the vision of all spirit shining in and through matter, all reality revealing itself in and through the unreal. To escape from this world of limitations while yet breathing on earth, into the boundless world of Freedom and Beauty,

Power and Brilliance, is the purpose of our brief but meaningful existence, the purpose illuminated by the Sivananda Literature, the purpose illustrated both in the processes, and the consummation, of fulfilment, in the life of Jesus as also of the towering Sage Sivananda.

Jesus revealed a profound respect for the public sentiment when he said 'the voice of the people is the voice of God.' He had an utter repugnance for religious insincerity, for he was very particular in advising 'When thou prayeth thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets that may be seen of men; but thou, when prayeth enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.'

—*Sivananda*

Immured in ignorance, man mistakes the wrong for the right, the unreal for the real, harbours belief in changing, perishable mind-made

objects. Leaving the reality of Self-delight within, he clings to the false nightmares of misery, for, his faculty of understanding and discrimination, without which he does not become better than a sheer inhabitant of the wild animal kingdom, is obscured by his egoistic consciousness and self, saturated as they are with selfish desires and passions. This submission of man to the dark impulses of attraction for the sense-objects of the world, has fettered him, and nothing has really bound man save his attention to, and attraction for, the dance of the phenomenal forces, the colour and veneer of a fleeting Nature.... The Name of Christ and the Word of Sivananda are a call to Greatness, to transcendental Life, to hold in our own existence the Perfection of the Father in Heaven which is but the state of highest spiritual Consciousness.

The following passages drawn from Sivananda Literature, point out systematically the path towards Perfection.

The need for the co-ordination of our thoughts with the higher life, the communion of our ideas with higher ideals, underlies our love for spiritual values, our interest in religious matters, our desires for holy association and studies. This noble purpose consists in our aspiration

for moving towards a higher life which transcends and comprehends whatever we normally experience in the material plane.

It is the aspiration to grow, to evolve, to direct oneself to a transcendental ideal which is at once real at the time of its experience. It goes without saying, that we have a background of our thoughts which decides our motives, and that background determines the nature of our aspiration. It determines the nature of the goal to which our aspiration directs us. To state it concisely, we have a consciousness of the difference between the nature of our present condition and the nature of the ideal which we have before us. This consciousness of the distinction between the two levels of life has arisen in us on account of various factors. Purvapunya or the results of the meritorious deeds which we have done in previous births is one of the factors which has caused the rise of this consciousness in us, the consciousness of the existence of a higher life and the inadequacy of the present life.

This we call in a technical term Viveka, a dissatisfaction with the superficial

experience that we have in the material level and a glimpse indistinct though it may be of the presence of the higher life. Together with this consciousness of the presence of the higher ideal, this aspiration for living the higher life, a distaste is created in us, however temporary or unsubstantial for what is incongruous with the nature of that higher ideal. We call this distaste, Vairagya or dispassion.

Essentially, man is a Divinity that is slowly struggling its circuitous way out of the restrictions of consciousness in the human environs, out of the heavy encumbrances of an age-old lower nature. Sin is a mistake into which an evolving intelligence inadvertantly slips for the purpose of receiving a sound lesson of experience. Sinner is but a saint-in-the-making, Sivananda writes, and goes on to heap praise on the redeeming aspects of the character of the apparently unfortunate one, praise couched in such words that do exert on his or her mind a specific and decisive influence. Such a teacher Sivananda is, and everyone who knows anything of Jesus Christ would certainly agree that this trait was equally distinctive of Jesus. The issue at hand, is concerned with the nature of the disciplines

that lead man out of his limitations, into his essential divine Being, with which Sivananda is here concerned.

An intense passion for the Real, a burning aspiration to realise the ultimately existent Being, includes the withdrawal of the natural consciousness of the visible objects of this world. Viveka and Vairagya come together. The one is the natural concomitant of the other. We have made an unconscious analysis of experience with our minds which has caused the rise of Viveka. When this analysis becomes conscious, it becomes a direct step in Sadhana.

An unconscious spiritual urge is felt as the result of conscious meritorious deeds which we have done in our past lives. We might have had some spiritual awareness in our previous lives also, and we might have thought over the problems of life and aspired for a solution. The present life is only a continuation of the past life. It is not a new life that we are leading now abruptly with a fresh beginning, but it is the continuation of a series.

It is just one rung in the ladder of evolution.

The purpose of the spiritual aspirant, therefore, is to make this unconscious analysis a conscious one. The conscious analysis begins with the perception and experience of what is immediately presented to us. We understand what it is that is immediately brought before our senses. We take for granted the reality of what our senses perceive. We see this physical world. We see our own selves as situated here as contents of this world. We are parts of this cosmos, this universe, this world.

Our present life is based on sense-perception. We are said to live, therefore, in a sense-world, a world that is presented to us by our senses. We do not question the authenticity of the experience that is brought to us by the senses, because we have identified to such an extent our consciousness with the form of the perception in which the objects in this world are presented to us or with which they come to us, to our consciousness. This is the basis of all philosophical and spiritual analysis, of the experiencing consciousness.

The spiritual aspirant is endowed with a special higher consciousness of the existence of something absolutely real which is above this experience which we receive through our senses. This aspiration for the Real is ingrained in the consciousness of the spiritual aspirant; only it gets intensified when he approaches the Guru, a spiritual preceptor, and receives the higher initiation from him but it is present there in him even before he approaches the Guru. Else, he would not have had the inclination to go to the spiritual Guru at all.

Will humanity ever dispense with all need for the light and guidance and grace from Christ?— That is impossible, inconceivable, so long as man is man and there gnaws at his heart a sense of the state of imperfection in which his self-conscious intelligence aids him, like a good mentor, find himself, so long as man has a large imuplse, a broad idea, a notion of true progress, a susceptibility to ideals, a sensitiveness to what the best in him feels and senses as the Truth, the Beautiful, the Ideal. . . .

He feels the need for a higher knowledge. He feels the need for his being

guided by a spiritual teacher. That means that he has already had within himself the rise of this consciousness of a trans-empirical life. It is in the seed state. It has to come to the state of a sprout, a plant and a tree later on, through the grace of the spiritual teacher, and through the grace of God.

Now with this aspiration, with this consciousness of the existence of a higher spiritual ideal, the aspirant begins his analysis in the light of the teachings of the Guru. It is the spiritual teacher who guides him in the process of this analysis. What is the form which this analysis takes? It is the analysis of his own self because the one object which is said to have doubtless existence is one's own self.

One may doubt anything in this world, but one cannot doubt about one's existence. All philosophical speculation, all aspiration, all endeavour, begin with this consciousness of the existence of one's self. But there comes the distinction between the awareness which a spiritual aspirant has in regard to his existence and the one which the ordinary man has in regard to himself.

The objects which are seen in the world are considered by the common man to be existing outside his body and senses, and he feels that a copy, as it were, of the objects is experienced by him in his mind. The object itself does not enter his eye or the ear, but there is a transmission of vibration from that object, which his consciousness becomes aware of, which becomes a content of his consciousness and on account of which he happens to know the existence of the physical object.

It is only the spiritual aspirant endowed with a higher discrimination that can question the validity of this form of experience. You see a person. But how do you do this? You may say that because you have got eyes. An aspirant will not be satisfied with that answer, if only he has that higher intellect, because he wishes to know what actually is the process by which he is enabled to be aware of another's existence. One may say that there is a vibration, as it were, emanating from the object outside and becoming a content of one's consciousness, but one must go deeper into these problems, for even the possibility of such a vibration has to be explained.

With his mind lodging a wisdom which by its very genius moves in a perpetual apprehension of all the higher laws of manifestation, in the perception of the causes that underlie the world of effects, in a full knowledge of the soul of all that is, and his heart enshrining a love that feels a Godhead wherever its feeling extends, the Indian enjoys a fullness of inner light that enables him to see Jesus as he was, is, and will always be, in truth, in reality, essentially, in Consciousness, in the Perfection of the Heavenly Father, in the Kingdom that is of the Godhead, in the aspirations that, howsoever conceiving him; rise towards him. If this is so, does not Sivananda with his irresistible prophetic energy, his boundless love for all mankind, his endless services in the cause of the awakening of the spiritual impulses in the masses of humanity, his radiant mystical temperament, his attainments in integral spiritual development, the right as also the most eloquent exponent of the true significance and the real nature of the life and teaching of Jesus?

One should practise Purna Yoga. All sides of our personality should be disciplined, transmuted sublimated. We are active, emotional, psychic, and intellectual. All these aspects in us have to be tarined

properly. Otherwise what will happen? There will be a revolt of that particular side which has been neglected in favour of certain others. If you neglect emotion, it will rebel against intellect. If intellect alone is taken as the predominant aspect, there will be the revolt of emotion against it. There should therefore be complete transformation of our personality through the practice of the Yoga of Synthesis. It is synthesis of the essential elements of all Yogas. It is therefore, a march of the total being of the individual to Godhead, the flight of the alone to the Alone, as Plato put it.

Alone you have to fly to the Alone. Of course, you will have help from the teacher in the beginning, but afterwards it will be an independent flight to the Eternal. As the great law-giver, Manu, said, you are born alone. You will go alone. You will take nothing from this world, and, therefore, even when you live here, you are alone. Remember, O man, your social relationships are only temporary. They are only aids in exhausting certain Karmas, nothing but these. This experience of social life which we have in this world is a stage in our development to

Eternal Life. It is a particular stage in the evolution of our individual being to Godhead. So you must make an all-round effort, not a one-sided effort. You should not lean to any one particular side. A simultaneous discipline of all the aspects must be there.

In this process of spiritual advancement, you will be greatly helped by the spiritual teacher, who has got a direct knowledge of the nature of the spiritual path. The spiritual path is super-sensible. It cannot be seen without eyes. It cannot be even heard of properly, because it is connected with Spiritual Reality. Even to get training in any particular branch of learning in this world you require a teacher, because you have no experience regarding the subject. More difficult is the spiritual subject, the subject of Yoga. The Yogi attempts to merge his personality in the cosmic, spiritual being, which is existent everywhere eternally. It is not going to be achieved in the future, because without its existence, even our present existence would be impossible.

As the farthest reach of the curent Western psychological research has exceeded the nine-

teenth century scientific notion of the sole reality and autonomy of the material principle, and arrived by its experimental knowledge, at the autonomy of the human mind, the spiritual aspirant transcends the brilliant limitations of all forms of conceptual consciousness and gains in his own experience the perfect awareness of the autonomy of the inner Spirit in man, and constantly endeavours to stabilise himself on its stately altitudes and realise its immeasurable riches in life here. Dissociated from the obstructing workings of an ego-centric life, "born anew", totally spiritualised in nature, possessed of a larger vision of enlightened intelligence, living from subtler and wider existence, knowledge and delight of being, the spirit of religious progression constantly expresses powers from higher levels of consciousness whose substrata alone are so imperfectly known, studied and categorised by the psycho-analytical thought on three levels of the 'subconscious', the 'preconscious', and the 'conscious'. The instinctive consciousness of the forms of life in the animal kingdom, the intellectual consciousness of the mental men, the aesthetic and cultural consciousness of the artistic and morally integrated personalities, are there in the spiritual individual taken up by a subjective process of radical transformation and rendered into the radiant terms of the pure light of universal consciousness, the

parent of all powers, forces, energies, principles; and, seeking the Self of the Transcendent Godhead in religious realization, he obtains the full Power of his inner Being.

The universe has been existing since aeons and it is going to exist for many millions of years, whereas the perception of this world by individuals is varying. This apparently perpetual existence of the universe makes us believe that the spiritual tual being must be eternal. If it has a beginning and an end, it will be the basis of eternal experience. Brahman must be eternal. Then alone can there be justification for our eternal aspiration for perfection. We have a yearning to be perfect; nobody wishes to be imperfect in any way. There is a longing to become complete in every way, in knowledge, power and experience of happiness. Everybody wants to have the utmost possible knowledge, the greatest power and consequently, the greatest freedom and happiness.

We want to exist for ever. Who wants to die? There is a desire in every one to live for ever, eternally; all have a dread of death. One wants to be the most in-

telligent being filled with cosmic consciousness, and wants to be fully free unrestricted by the things of this world. We want unlimited bliss. We have an aspiration for Satchidananda. We want to have an eternal experience of existence—absolute, an eternal experience and absolute knowledge, absolute bliss and absolute power. We want everything complete and infinite. And according to the analysis that we have made, infinite bliss or infinite knowledge would be impossible unless we intimately relate oureslves with the spiritual being, with the Infinite. In other words we must become the Infinite.

To know the Infinite is to become the Infinite, and we cannot know It through the senses. For the moment we look at it through the senses, it would appear like the world. After all what is this world? This world itself is God. God is not somewhere outside the world. But He is not seen, not recognised. He is recognised in a wrong way. We think He is the body. He is the matter, He is space, He is time, He is the gross world. No. This is not correct perception. *Human perception does not correspond to Reality*. Reality consists in the experience of Chit, knowledge

uncontracted. This is the only thing that is eternal, and when it is objectified and looked at through the mind and the senses, it becomes the physical universe.

So, the purpose of Yoga is to withdraw the mind from objective perception and centre it in Chit. It is the resting of the seer in his own Self. Now, in this world the consciousness is in a state of tension. It is moving outside the search of pleasure. It has to be brought back from this fruitless quest and made to rest in itself. Only when it rests in itself there is experience of pleasure. Pleasure is not the result of contact of a person with an object. It is the result of the cessation of desire. As long as a desired object is not possessed, there is unrest, but when the desire is quenched, there is happiness, Happiness has not come from the object. It has come from the extinction of the particular form of the mind which was mvoing outside in search of peace. Therefore, bliss is in the heart of consciousness. It is everywhere, because without it no perception is possible.

Thus the process by which we endeavour to unite ourselves with that eternal

spiritual being for the sake of experiencing eternal bliss in Yoga. Yoga is the goal as well the process. It means joining or uniting the individual with the Supreme, or according to another etymological meaning, it means meditation. Yoga is meditation, and also union of the soul with Godhead. When it is taken in the sense of the means, it is meditation, and when it is taken in the sense of the goal, it is absorption in Godhead. And to attain this goal we practise meditation. Yoga can be practised in one's daily life. It is possible for one to be a Yogi every moment of one's life, if only one understands the technique of Yoga.

It is possible, as Krishna has said, for one to be a Yogi every moment of one's life, whatever be the action that he may be doing. Every act can be turned into Yoga, (Karma Yoga), every feeling into Yoga (Bhakti Yoga) and every volition into Yoga (Raja Yoga) and every thought into Yoga (Jnana Yoga). Whatever you feel, or understand, or will, or do, can be converted into a step in the practice of Yoga.

How? It can be done only by giving

it the magical touch of the consciousness of the presence of the Eternal in all things. Karma Yoga is the worship of the Supreme Being in the form the action. It is service done to the Eternal through our limited limbs, organs. Every act that we do volitionally or intellectually, can be converted into Yoga. When the process of ratiocination is made the instrument in the practice of Yoga, it becomes Jnana Yoga, which is peculiar method of directly coming into contact with the Eternal in its essential nature of Knowledge. And all other Yogas are aids to the realisation of this eternal consciousness itself.

The daring of the discovering spirit, the boldest marches of the superior mind, the dynamic spirit of spiritual adventure, an ever-seeking idea bent on breaking the barriers of the complacency and routine of rational awareness, the movement of the most profound perceptions insisting on the insufficiency of the merely intellectual, the efforts of the unknown parts of the creative intelligence that seize on flashes, insights, intimations, intuitions, illuminations, and test their power and value in life,—are activities arising from those sources of consciousness that lie beyond the reach and comprehension of the

insolent spirit dressed in the assertions of the fixed formulas of modern knowledge of the mere processes of phenomena. Not binding itself in its field of discriminating investigation to a restricted study either of the deliverances of sensible experiences, or of the data of the interesting phases of higher psychological phenomena, the religious intelligence of the aspirant, with its skill, subtlety and intensity of understanding highly heightened in all directions of their spiritual activity, by prolonged practices in a powerful Yogic discipline, releases into a dynamic functioning its fundamental capacity for experiencing the world of being in our realms of becoming, works from dimensions above our four-dimensional space-time continuum, deals with the hidden essences of all manifested things that determine their processes and surface exressions which alone are open to the most scrupulous search and utilitarian exploitation by the pragmatic human reason and scientific technique, and holds in its own being the experience of the existence of Consciousness as such, Consciousness-in-itself, or Consciousness as an Infinity of Dear Delight.

What is our duty in this life? All our duties, the so-called duties, are aids to the fulfilment of the supreme duty of

Self-realisation, the realisation of the existence of the Supreme Being in our own Self. The existence of that Being in other persons cannot be realised unless it becomes a part and parcel of experiencing consciousness. If you objectify that external being, you see it in the frame-work of external beings. Then it becomes a physical body. So, one should have an experience of the Eternal in oneself in order that its spiritual realisation can be possible. And that experience in our Self becomes vast like the ocean, an infinite expanse of consciousness. It overflows withthe knowledge of the Supreme. In other words, there is no difference between one's essential nature and the essential nature of the Divine Being.

Any simple undeceived vision obtained even during the initial phases of an integral spiritual experience brought to being by rendering intensively real to our daily awareness, the terms, the truths, the principles of the Reality seated in the Law of our inner being, withdrawn from bodily consciousness, lifted above all mental phenomena, ranging beyond the horizonless stretches of Universal Life, makes it trebly clear to us that Yoga consists not only in the array

of techniques that energised the whole of our being, the procession of disciplines that characterised or regulated the progression of our self-unfolding and expanding Consciousness, the methods that began their action by employing the best services of our elevated thoughts, purified emotions, enlightened will, uncompromising aspiration and a certain fundamental capacity for concentration, in the constant wonder and the unbroken continuity of a thrill of the cosmic life they engendered, the constant miracle of a transcendental vision and living they aimed at, epiphany of the Powers of Consciousness they sought to manifest but is constituted essentially and primarily by an ontological experience, by a coalescence of the liberated individual with the Infinite, by an ascension of the inner being from the trammels of finitising consciousness, phenomenality, universality, into the Ineffable Transcendence.

With this meditation you have to act in this world. There should be no despondency at any moment in your life. This is an important thing which every aspirant should remember. No grief should be felt at any time, because the moment you are disturbed, upset or grieved, you must understand that you have not pro-

perly grasped the technique of Yoga. For, if you have properly understood the technique of Yoga, you will know how to transform every situation into Yoga. Ignorance is the cause of pain. We cannot be in a state of pain or sorrow if we have a proper conception of Yoga. Yoga is not confined to a group of people in the world. Yoga is the art of life, the science of life. Who does not want life? Everybody wants to live and know the art of living correctly, wisely, at its highest and the best. That is called Yoga.

Everybody can be a Yogi at some stage of life. Yoga is not confined to monks and Bhikshus alone, living in caves. It is the art of living an intelligent, perfect life. Anyone who is a Yogi lives a happy and perfect life, and a person who is not at all in any stage of Yoga is a miserable being. He suffers in this world. By 'Yoga' I do not mean here the ultimate Realisation, but the process of attainment. It is any step taken towards the realisation of that end. Of course, to the best of your ability you must act. You must not be slack in your meditation. All your knowledge and power you must put in a state of equilibrium. There should be

equilibrium and dexterity, both together. Yogah karmasu kausalam. Yoga is equilibrium of mind. Yoga is skill or dexterity in action.

You must be adept in action. What is the meaning of being an adept? You must fulfil your duty, be active in such a way that you are not disturbed by any thing in this world and you are ever in tune with the Absolute. That is dexterity in action. This dexterity is the consequence of an equilibrated mind. Samatwam Yoga uchyate. So the two practices should go together—internal tranquillity of mind and external ability to transform every action into Yoga. Only he who has understood this technique can be a real aspirant. He alone can tread the path to the Spirit, without undergoing any difficulty and there will be no difficulty if there is direct guidance from the Guru.

—*Sivananda.*

Interpretation of 'philosophia perennis' imbedded in the foundational Indian sacred texts, as an art and as an aim atta'ins its consummate

fulfilment, and thereby carries the best merits and yields the highest results, not when it scrupulously conforms itself to the exacting canons of exegesis or the recognised principles of herementeutics, much less by an easy resort to the apparently dignified method of ignorant and impatient bungling such as that of comparison and conjecture adopted by the modern European scholarship, but when wielded by a 'qualitative' Mind richly endowed with a keen inner spiritual sensitivity that works itself to heights of perceptive power, inspired insight, intuitive sense, "imaginative" association, and a ready capacity both for an adoption of the critical and objective view by standing back and away from, and for an extraction of the central vitality and creative essence of the textual content by a total higher psychological and spiritual self-identification with the spirit of the text. Such an interpretative Mind grants the reader, at every turn, the delight intellectual insights into, and a power for living and moving in the inner meaning and soul of, the text.

The ancient teachers have stressed that a spiritual aspirant should undergo training for at least twelve years under a spiritual teacher. Only then can there be real progress, because the correct tech-

nique of Yoga can be taught only by the Guru. After understanding, one should practise Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana. There is first hearing the nature of Truth from the Guru and then contemplation and meditation. This meditation should go on every moment of our life. Meditation should not be confined only to a particular part of the day. It is not enough if one carries on meditation for a part of the day, and then absolutely forgets it at other times. Else, there will be a fall. Here comes the importance of Karma Yoga.

You should not make a sharp distinction between meditation and Karma Yoga. Otherwise, you will find it very difficult to act in the world. But if you transform every action by the power of meditation, then you will find there will be no difficulty in living in the world a peaceful and happy life. Life will be a happy process of spiritual progress if the power of meditation gives strength to the action that you do. Action is an external expression, an outward manifestation of an internal aspiration or realisation. I have used the two words: aspiration and realisation. Karma Yoga is the external expression of

an aspiration or a realisation. In the case of Siddha Purushas it is the manifestation of an internal realisation, but in the Sadhakas it is the manifestation of an internal aspiration.

In the case of the Siddhas, there is no question of self-transformation or self-purification. Every action that they do is cosmic process. It is not *individual* action done through the limbs. It is a universal movement, which is an end in itself. The Karma Yoga of the Sadhaka is a means to such a state of cosmic realisation. The aim of the Sadhaka is, therefore, to become a cosmic being, to be a Purushottama, the Lord of the Universe, pervading the whole universe. This is the goal of all processes of Yoga. I want to stress the point that Yoga is not something queer; extraordinary or other-worldly. It is the most useful, most necessary thing, because it is the art of the perfect life. Remember this. It is the art of living wisely and it is the technique of the realisation of the supreme bliss and beatitude.

This is the goal of life. This you have to remember at all times of your

life, and you should try your best to put this into practice every day, every moment, as long as you are conscious living beings. Supterutthaya Suptyantam Brahmaikam pravichintyatam. A great sage has said: "Remember God alone, the Supreme Being alone, throughout the day." Do not forget this. The moment you get up from the bed in the morning you must start thinking of God, and this thinking must be there till you are overpowered by sleep. Every action that you do should be charged with your remembrance of God. This is the technique of Yoga. This should be learned under a spiritual teacher and then one must enter into deep meditation for the sake of the supreme Realisation.

Though the Centre of his Consciousness has been transferred to the Pinciple of the Absolute Reality of the Adwaita Vedantins, Swami Sivananda is not, in his own inner achieved actual experience, that type of absolutistic monist who having sought his ascension to its transcendental reaches and heights, lost his way there in the voiceless and colourless stretches of Perfect Silence and Nirvanic Poise, but is

one who has retraced his steps back, from such an experience with the retained active awareness of the heights thereof, into the divine dynamism of manifested expressions of spiritual enlightenment in a terrestrial status of life. Living as it does from the intensely real and essentially 'vital' spiritual domains of the divine Being which the ordinary man does not even believe can exist, the inner divine being of Sivananda, represents in reality, here on earth, in the material body, to any critical intelligence of appreciative assimilation, a profoundly inspiring scintillant symbol of the most magnificent commingling of God and Man—God with His great powers of Consciousness, absolute attributes, characteristic deeds of love and concealed acts of grace and Man without his defects and deficiencies of nature and impurities and imperfections of existence. The symphonic rhythms of the mission of Sivananda are unmistakably formations from the numberless notes emanating from an exquisite coalescent activity of the Force of the fully descended Divinity and the ascended powers of the transfigured and perfected humanity.

Intellect can move only in a vicious circle of possibilities and probabilities. It hovers round an object: deeper it can ne-

ver go. It cannot enter into, and he is one with it; and, be it noted, without complete identity knowledge is impossible. Intellect accepts the evidence of the senses and the results of inference, but it rejects as spurious the deepest subjective intuitions. Profound insight tells us that there is something more in man than is apparent in his ordinary consciousness: *something* which originates all thoughts and emotions, a finer spiritual presence which keeps him ever dissatisfied with mere earthly pursuits. The doctrine that the ordinary condition of man is not his final state, that he has a deeper self, an immortal Spirit, a light that can never be extinguished, has the longest intellectual ancestry.

All the great thinkers of the world unite in asking us to know this Self in man. While our bodily organization undergoes change every moment, while our thoughts gather like clouds in the sky and disperse again the Real Self is never lost. It is all-pervading though distinct from all. It is the source of the sense of identity through numerous transformations. It remains itself though it sees all things. It is the one constant which remains un-

changed in the multiple activities of the universe. Our limited personality is conscious only by fits and starts. There are large gaps in it. Even if death overtakes a man, the seer cannot die.

Nothing on the objective side can touch the subject. This ever-persisting Self which is the eternal subject, is not capable of proof, nor does it need any. It is self-proved. It is the basic substratnum of every act of knowledge, and vivifies every organ and faculty. This universal Self becomes confused with the empirical self owing to mental limitations and impurities. When we break through the ring of the smoke round the self, unwrap the sheaths which cover it, we achieve here and now, in the physical body, the destiny of our being. The "I", the "Atman" which is infinitely simple and is a trinity of transcendent Reality, Awareness and Freedom.

Our concern here is only with the intelligent nature of the person, for all perception refers to an intelligence. This intelligence is responsible for the perception of the world outside. The intelligent nature should be present in the object also; else your intelligent nature cannot be in

contact with it and you may not be aware of the existence of the outside world. Now the question would arise: Taking for granted that there is a spiritual or intelligent element in the outside object also, where is the need for positing a relation between the seer and the seen? The need is felt when we become aware of the fact that perception is impossible without a relation, and if perception is a fact relation is a fact, and if relation is a fact, it must be intelligent, spiritual.

—*Sivananda*

In combination with the covertly operative Forces of the Divine Grace, the special concatenations of inner psychic and conational conditions, establish a complete sway over the human heart, gain a total control upon its adoring powers, and turn them into a great radiance of overwhelming divine love, which has fires that purify, tears that drip nectar, sentiments that organise themselves into high states of ecstasy, moods that make a Heaven and find a Paradise even in a lament, visions that apprehend the exquisite spiritual beauty of the Divine Beloved everywhere, many types of exalted spiritual feeling which sense, touch, grasp and experience

the Divine by all manner of relations with it, through all "bhavanas", in all conditions, at all times, an aesthetic being which is a habitual captive to the trances that throw open the gates of the transcendental realisations. It is a Divine Love which gathering up all its raised and rarefied energies into one all-cosuming Flame casts it, with an infinite concentration, upon the responsive, reactive, close advancing Bosom of the Eternal Lover, the Christ in us, until at last the Lover and the Beloved are lost to the observing human eye, into the ineffable Beyond, leaving their foot-prints upon the sands of human history, the inspirational impress of their life-incidents upon the memories of the devotees, and the glimpses of their wisdom-light upon the pages of religious literature. Any number of structural details concerning such matters as we have sought to hint here, can be found in the writings of Sivananda who has distinguished himself at once as a supreme Jnani and a supreme Bhakta.

NINETEEN and a quarter of a century ago, Jesus of Nazareth said: "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you, that ye

may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." True, it is only a superhuman spiritual aspirant that can live up to this teaching, but at no time was there a greater need than now to assimilate at least part of its spirit in international relations.

What may be the sublimest virtue for the spiritual aspirant may not, indeed, be applicable in the formulation of collective perspective or national attitude. But, when Jesus asked to love one's enemies, he did not imply that one should debase oneself, forsake the dignity of human life, abandon the cherished ideals of freedom of mind and spirit, justice and truth, but stressed upon the vital fact of the failure of hatred, belligerancy, truncheon displomacy, preconditioning of attitude and dogmatic pressure-politics to solve the agonizing problems that beset the world and, worst of all, surreptitiously encroach upon the life of the common man.

Indeed, if Jesus were alive today, he would have been no less relentless than any fair-minded individual in opposing the

equation of good with evil, truth with untruth, justice with the debasement of the human spirit, democracy with totalitarianism. The truth of the unalterable preference is never in question; the determination to uphold the former when assailed by the latter is never in question; but it is the spirit with which one fructifies the ideals of truth, dignity of life, freedom and fairplay in their widest concept, and the means that one pursues to foster them, that are challenged. The question looming large over mankind is whether one is justified in taking recourse to the very means one is trying to counteract, if one has any right to fan up the flames of war and destruction while crusading for the ideals that are essentially positive through the negative means of belligerancy-psychosis, whereby the security of man is menaced and his economic well-being undermined.

The need of the hour is one of searching of the heart, and inquiring: if a little more of goodwill, a measure of co-operation in widening the areas of agreement, a spirit of accommodation without sacrificing one's ideals, a feeling for common security and well-being of the people,

could not pose a better prospect of peace; if a little broadening of one's vision of the material interests and the spiritual welfare of man, a little more of initiative towards the solution of problems, a degree of effort at understanding the other man's point of view and his difficulties, could not give a wholesome promise of amity and fellowship; if a will to succeed and strength to accept the unavoidable reconciliation to co-existence without necessarily sacrificing one's conviction of the inevitable victory of the ideals of truth and love and freedom of the human spirit, could not substantially contribute to common good.

—*Sivananda.*

Such were the deeds wrought by the words, the faith, the soul-force, of Christ, that he was, in the compelling power he exerted on, and the transforming influence he exercised over, all mankind and all Nature, ineffably and literally, above and beyond all earthly kings. By a comparison between Christ and Canute that he draws, Sivananda opens but just a single window upon that Eminence of Christ which would for ever remain difficult of comprehension and

more of appreciation to an intelligence given over to the rules of sheer empirical reason.

THE human body is the copy of the cosmic structure in miniature and Prana enlivens and animates the organism. Each element has gone into its constitution. The key-force behind all forces of nature is Prana. Prana is the manifest essence of all the forces that exist. The cerebro-spinal system forms man's subtle switch-board. The different subtle psychic centres dominate particular elements of forces in nature. By gaining mastery over the vital astral centres located therein, man obtains control over every force of nature.

Herein we have an unparalleled instance of the most marvellous human economy ever perfected. What the engineer and the scientist of today strive to do through gigantic projects with prodigious output of man-power, money and material, the method effectively achieves with the utmost vital economy and a technique ruled by a surprisingly simple logic. This is what makes the difference between a Christ and a Canute. The former stills

the tossing waves of stormy waters with a single motion of his hand whereas the mighty monarch of a proud land, despite all the wealth of his kingly coffers and countless horses and men even, has to move his royal throne further up the beach.

—*Sivananda.*

What Yoga is, is to be known by Yoga alone, by fulfilling the initial conditions of psychic and spiritual disciplines it lays down, by the all-governing Transcendental awareness and an equally all-determining Cosmic Vision, Love and Delight, the advanced stages of practice and the states of experience in its fields, engender and continually keep up, and those who have thus known Yoga, or known it by "darshana" which is an all-inclusive perception received in a vast spiritual realisation, by "anubhava" which is knowing by being what was aimed at to be known, by gnosis which in the richness of significance we would have it bear, far exceeds the most luminous practical philosophical connotation Theodotus sought to invest it with,—have known it to be an illimitable structure of gnostic awareness supporting in itself the sport of numberless powers and functions of divine

Consciousness that are most operative in the exercise of equal vision, in the aesthesis of the discovery and enjoyment of the Ineffable Being in the commonest of things, and bearing both in the statuses of its static Poise and in the movements of its dynamic processes, a divine delight, a spiritual aesthesis. And, which of the Yoga adherents who know in experience, gnosis as dynamis, and aesthesis as inherent and expressive everywhere in both, would, when brought into contact with Sivananda, fail to perceive a palpable manifestation of this triplicity of Divine Nature, even in the least of his acts and gestures,

LORD Jesus is the greatest Yogi on earth. He is a Synthetic Yogi. He did service. He was a devotee. He preached, "Love thy Lord with all your heart, mind and soul." He was a Jnani, who said, "I and my Father are one." That is the significance of *Tat Twam Asi*. The individual soul is identical with the Supreme Soul, when the ignorance is destroyed, when the veil of Avidya is torn asunder. Just as a drop becomes one with the ocean, so also the individual soul becomes identical with the Supreme Soul when it is endowed with the virtuous qualities like

Amanitwam, Adambhitwam, humility, *Ahimsa,* non-injury. So he said, "I and my Father are One." His teachings, the Sermon on the Mount, are wonderful. We must remember his teachings and live in the spirit. Then only are we Christians.

A true Christian is a true Hindu, a true Muslim. A little harsh word we cannot tolerate. We retaliate. We are not Christians then. "Blessed are the meek". The cream of whole of the ethical teachings is there. Bless that man who curses you, bless that man who persecutes you. Show him your love. If you live according to the spirit of his teachings, you can become a superman, a God. So let us celebrate this real Christmas, the Light of Jesus Christ, the Light of God that is shining in our heart(after removing the weeds of jealousy, *Raga-Dwesha,* which are the obstacles that prevent us from attaining the supreme realisation of oneness with the Supreme Being.

In itself and always, by its very nature, genius, and nomenclature, Yoga comprises in its illimitable vision and all-transforming action, an ever triumphant attitude and an effective technique,

a high-souled knowledge and a sure way for every conceivable mode, mood and turn of human psychological material and life, and may take up any trend in human nature and turn it towards the Divine hold any form of discriminating thought under the stress of engrossing meditation and cast it into the terms of a self-luminous intuitional knowledge, possess human emotion and change it into an all-absorbing adoration of the Divine everywhere, touch all forms of human action and inform them with the spirit of a close God-awareness, invade the psychic sensitiveness of the Seeker and release from the inner reaches of his consciousness a whole troop of supernormal powers, or it may dominate, direct and divinise the perceptions and the aestheticism of an austerely ecstatic spiritual artist, or it may even seize on human hatred and give it its absolute and merge it in the Infinite. All these processes of Yoga which constitute the types and patterns of its practice have received an inspiring popular formulation in the Sivananda Literature.

Lord Jesus is *Parabrahman* Himself. The Christ-Consciousness is Absolute Consciousness, one homogeneous consciousness, *Chidghana*. Christ-Consciousness is beyond good and evil. It is above all *Dwan-*

dwas, pairs of opposites. It is pure bliss—*Brahmanandam*. So let us celebrate such a Christmas in our hearts by serving all and cultivating all virtues and by loving all. "Love thy neighbour as thyself," because he is your own Self, not because he is just your neighbour. "Love your neighbour" means "Develop cosmic love." Share what you have with others—not closing the door and eating *pedas* etc. Let us awaken this noble, sublime consciousness. By serving humanity, by doing Japa, meditation, by reunnciation will come peace. Share what you have with the poor. Jesus preached renunciation. "A camel can enter the eye of a needle, but a rich man cannot enter the Kingdom of God," because he had forgotten the Lord. He thinks that he is the Lord. He preached renunciation. He preached humility. If you are established in this one virtue, you have got the master-key to open the door of Elysian Bliss. Let us ever remember this. Let us daily celebrate Christmas in our hearts, not outside with cakes and biscuits. The real cake is within. Let us drink the immortal bliss by being in unison with the Highest Bliss. All desires are gratified there, because it is full. It contains everything. If you take tea in the morning,

again in the evening you want tea. It is not so in Christ Consciousness. It is full. *"Poornamadah Poornamidam."* If you want curd, it is there. If you want cocoa, it is there. It is self-contained. Everyday you sing: *"Poornamadah poornamidam, poornat poornamudachyate, poornasya poornamadaya poornamevavasishyate."* That is full and this is full. By removing full from the full, fullness alone remains. So it is ever full. Hence all Vasanas are burnt. So let us try to attain the Plenum.

In accordance with the ordinances of the Divine, from our earliest youthhood, Yoga claimed the whole of our life, enlisted for its own Aims, all the services of a new set of the Powers of Consciousness its scientific disciplines caused in us, admitted us to a view of the vast domains of unsounded depths and unexplored mysteries beyond Mind, revealed to our inner perception the supernal beauties of the most radiant Divine Life the Yogic type of Superman, Sivananda, conceals in his restlessly active prophetic personality, and has always meant to us, at its ascending levels, several things, apart from what it is at the terrain of hmuan experience and thought, a system of science with its body of methodically formulated thought obtained by experiment and in experience, a field of psycho-

logy which while covering the deepest insights into the fundamental movements of human mind and nature, carries the time-tried techniques for the transformation of the entire human psychological material, and as an art of life which consists in applying Yogic knowledge for reaching at, and making manifest, the Perfection of the inner Being, the Perfection that Jesus implicitly referred to when He admonished everyman to be as perfect as the Father in Heaven. The standpoint of the assimilation of Divine Perfection into the human Consciousness is common to all religions.

Jesus is a Yogi who preached Karma Bhakti and Jnana. Let us study Bible and live in the spirit of his teachings and become true Christians. A true Christian, a true Parsi, a true Muslim, a true Hindu are all the same. The essentials of all religions are the same. It is only the external rituals that are different. "Be truthful. Be pure. Be virtuous. Love all. Never hurt anybody's feelings. Share. Give. Utilise every drop of blood in the service of humanity. Love the Lord in all." These are the great words of the *Mahapurusha*, Lord Jesus. Practise these and become true Christians and spread the message

of love, disinterested service, prayerfulness and devotion and attain the Heaven, which is Atma, Purusha or Brahman.

—*Sivananda.*

Christianity, with its great principles of love whose true continuity is to be sought in the formation of genuine human brotherhood; Hinduism, with its insistence on the infinite spiritual dignity of man; Buddhism, with its stress on love for all beings and a spirit of self-denial—are, maintains Sivananda, some of the religions whose inner essence has to be drawn out into a synthetic wisdom of contemporary mankind, and made the regulating power in all human relations, and rendered the foundations for the universal brotherhood and world peace. Lack of 'something' to live by, a practical philosophy and psychology of living, is largely responsible for the present crisis in individual lives and human affairs. Modern man, for some time past, has been making frantic efforts at finding peace; but peace has always eluded his grasp. And in the absence of a faith, a sane way of life-style that could give him an inward, and so a real, poise and rest, he has been embracing abnormal ideologies and 'pernicious' philosophies.

Commonsense revolts against fitting the circle of unsuitable ancient religious dogmas into the square of the peculiar modern conditions thrown up into existence by the complex twentieth century civilization. The new-fangled philosophies, though based on reason, with their tall claims are fizzling out for want of an idealistic attitude, an inner energy that could sustain the soul of modern man, help flowering his tendency to exceed himself, and enable him to attain internal growth and peace corresponding to the proportions of external achievements and order. Responding to a long-felt need thinkers of light and leading, here and there, have individually made sincere and painstaking efforts at evolving by synthesising the best in the ancient religious wisdom and modern thought, a new philosophy and psychology of life for contemporary humanity. For obvious reasons their success has not been considerable. And now we find ourselves confronted with the entirely new structure of philosophical and psychological values of everyday inspired living, on the foundations of all that is best in the cultural and spiritual heritage of India, and in the modern thought of the West.

THE urge for peace which unmistakably manifests itself in the wise men of the

world, in those who have the power of discrimination well developed in them is proof enough to convince even the rank sceptic that the essential nature of man is Peace. The Self or the Atman which alone is Reality in every being here, is Peace, because It is non-dual. Its other 'Names'—if we can call them 'Names'!—are Truth, Love, Life, Light, Knowledge, Bliss. This Atman is the ultimate Reality of every religion, though each religion gives It a 'Name' of its own. If you wish to have Peace, therefore, all that you have to do is to awaken Man to his own real Nature.

Centuries before the birth of her Buddha, a supreme insight into the core of the complex psychological consciousness of Man, a luminous hold on the underlying and determinative forces of the characteristic lines of General Human Nature, and an abiding ecstatic experience of the dynamic Peace of the omnipresent Reality animating and exceeding the play of all dualities on a terrestrial plane, the wild dance of contradictions in all phenomenal life, fully enlightened and empowered the intuitive mind of India, to make immortal formulations in metrical invocations and sonorous hymns of the Vedas, the

final and undying principles of perpetual individual and world peace.

Man should adhere to Truth in every sphere of life. He should love all, even those whom he considers to be his enemies—for, enemies he should have none. He should respect, love and protect the life of all other beings. Killing of every sort—not only of human beings, but of animals too—should be anathema to him. He should reveal by his thoughts, words and deeds that he is an enlightened being, a Man who has a certain amount of Knowledge which the lower forms of life do not posses. Then and then alone will there be Peace in this world. Politics has its basis in sociology; sociology has its basis in individual personal development; individual personal development is governed by the philosophy and the religion that each man follows! The philosophy of the East considers Man as the unit. Man is asked to perfect himself. As the world is only a mirage projected by his own nescience, he is to ignore it and concentrate all his attention on his own Self, removing the defects within him. This has often been called a futile "other world" philosophy which deprives man of what this

world can give him and makes him a dreamer, an idealist, unfit to inhabit this earth. On the contrary, it is this philosophy alone that can give us Peace. Disregarding the world outside him, man endeavours to perfect himself, to find the Peace within himself—for, Peace is the nature of the Self. He loves his neighbours, for Love is the nature of the Self within. A nation or a community composed of such men is naturally peace-loving, united and harmonious. It is a great psychological advantage to tell man that he is of greater moment to himself than what the world around him appears to him to be to make him realise that what the world is, depends on what he is and thus to educate him to the Peace within himself, so that the world might enjoy Peace.

—*Sivananda.*

Central to the teaching of Christ as also of Sivananda, is the emphasis on the spirit of renunciation, and renunciation is but a corollary of spiritual maturity, a necessity of ripened wisdom, and an obligation imposed upon man for a life in the process of being lived from the standpoint and the nature of the infinite that

transcends all the opulence of individual excellence and cosmic richness. Indispensable as the most effective condition for the breaking of the several barriers of separative existence, divided experiences, finitising tendencies and relative values built by the individual, the life of renunciation is principally a life in which thought is not extinguished but freed from every distraction incidental to worldly living, given an upward turn and rendered into the power of a highly vigilant discrimination that questions Heaven itself, finds it wanting, and recoils upon the Infinite, in one rapt contemplation; feeling is not abolished but is lifted above the compulsions of instinct and desire, the culture of devotion, the ecstasies of the mystical life, and made a fixed light of conative awareness of the Infinite; action is not abandoned but its energies are drawn up and diverted to sustain the intensities of a life dedicated to the pursuit of its destiny beyond the bourne of Time-eternity, habituating itself to the transcendental point of view; the world is not negated but divested in a critical spiritual consciousness, of its thousand falsehoods, and is being seen from the perspective of Timeless-eternity, against the background of the Absolute which shrinks the very vastness of the universes into a petty canvas; and does not shy away from the pleasures, the realities and the values of a

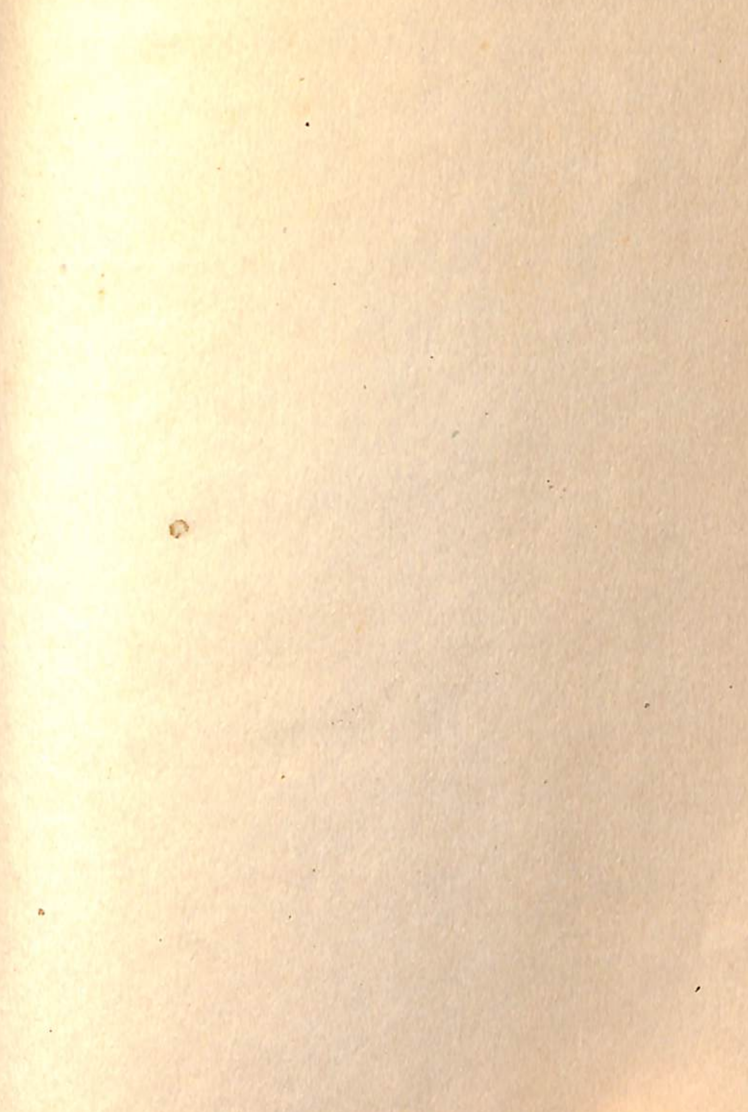
splendid social world, but is sloughing off the limitations which restrict the freedom of Consciousness, has sought its liberation from a subjection to an endless inconsequential swing between a tear and a smile, attraction and repulsion, content and discontent, and is engrossed in approaching the verities and the values of the infinity of bliss which is inalineable from as infinity of being and knowledge.

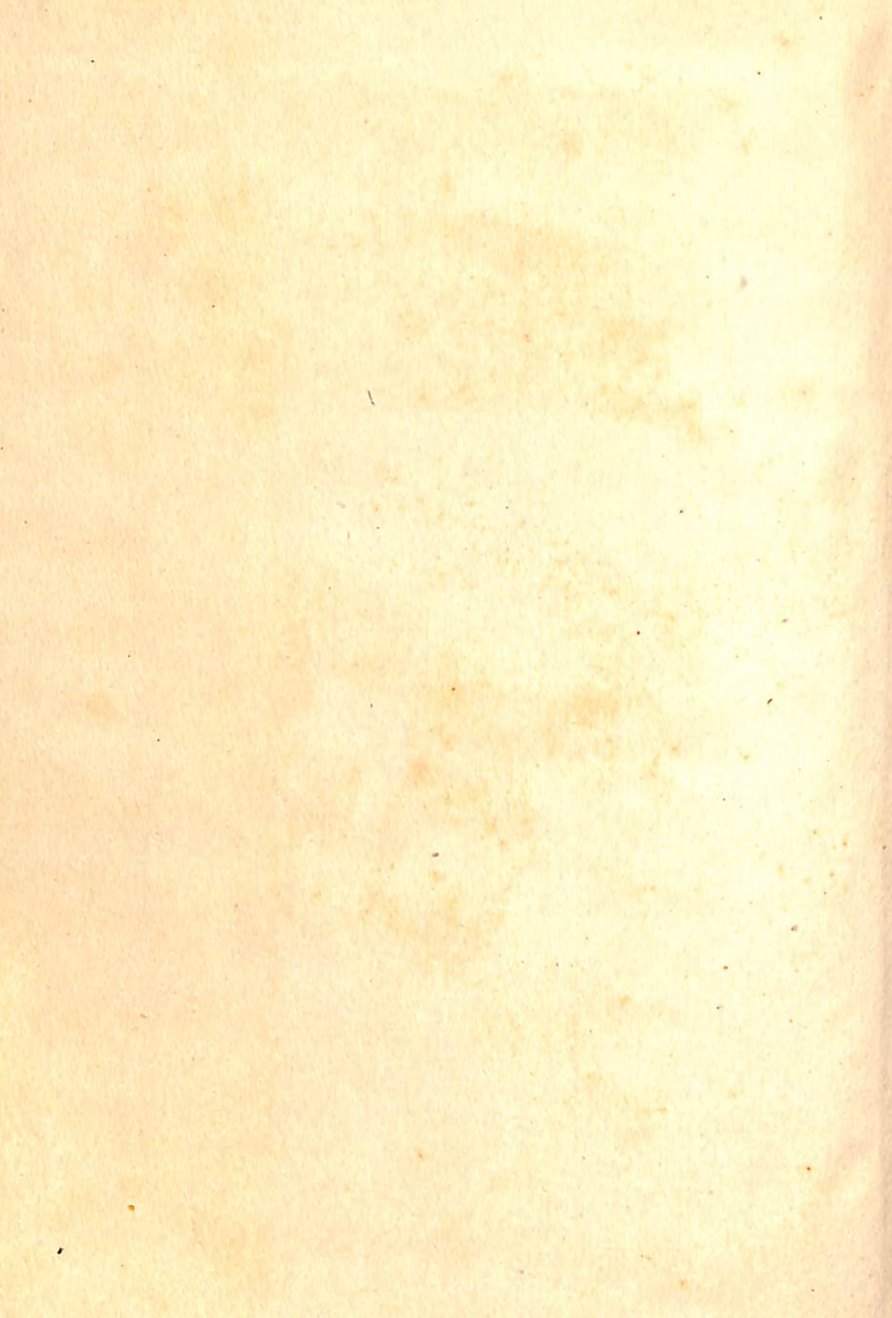
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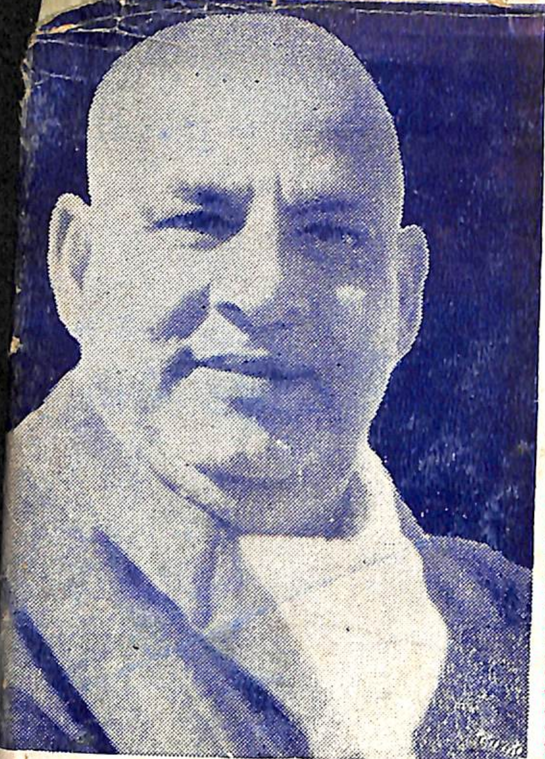
ANCHORED in *adhyatma-yoga* and resting in the tranquil intensities of an exalted experience in the depths, profundities and altitudes of his internal essential awareness of the Divine Reality, Swami Sivananda has yet rendered his outer life pregnant, instinct and reactive with the breathing powers of Godhead, drawn into the external activity of his mind, his heart, his will, his life, several new powers of Consciousness, and distinguished himself to a measure to which no other preceding Self-realized Sage has ever done, as an ardent ministrant of life-affirming joy, as a divinely excited disseminator of spiritual knowledge for all possible purposes of success, freedom, enlightenment, as an endearing comrade and silent teacher of all and sundry, as a Conscious

Force of God engaged in the establishment of spiritual *dharma*. Notwithstanding his wrapt dwelling in the ceaseless processes of his inner communion with *Satchidananda*, he has yet chosen with the choice of unlimited spiritual liberty and possibility to act and labour amidst the masses of mankind, as a being full of self-renovating spiritual attitudes and reactions which when observed by us, come to correct all the errors of the narrow human modes of our consciousness, as a universal person of many most chastening and elevating new angles of vision and outlook, of superlative moral excellences. Boundless in his earnestness and enthusiasm to bring comfort, cheer, courage, and the sure guidance of spiritual Light within the reach of all, he has drilled the best of his phenomenal energies and employed all avenues of communication for achieving the central aims of his Mission, and, we discern, he has assigned to Vedanta, in his works bearing upon its themes, several new functions and purposes to meet the demands of modern mind.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.







SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA



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WITHOUT reasoning like Nagarjuna, thinking like Newton, writing like Racine, reporting like Sanjaya, articulating wisdom like Solomon, conversing like Narada, composing like Bach, painting like Van Dyck, Rapheal and Ravivarma, Sivananda has, by virtue of his heart of universal compassion, and by reason of his integral realisation of the supra-ethical Essence within himself, in all mankind, in all Nature, and in the transcendent Godhead, reached the End of Evolution, scaled, in his own inner Consciousness, the heights of Perfection, and the most powerful personality he commands is but a sheer outer mask, an excuse for the perpetuation of the divine Mission of forming human character, quickening human aspiration, divinising human life, and raising as many aspiring human individuals as possible, through the disciplines of ethics, to the splendid planes of Life beyond the light and the shade, the "ought" and the "is", the good and the bad, the right and the wrong of the duality-ridden ethical realms.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.